

# ***CASES and STUDY GUIDE***

by David B. Magleby and Ann G. Serow



EVERETT CARLL LADD

**THE AMERICAN POLITY**

*Fourth Edition*

Cases and Study Guide

# The American Polity

Fourth Edition

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# To the Student: Reading the Text, Understanding Data, and Taking Exams

This book is really two books in one. It is first a collection of readings or cases organized to follow the chapters in the text. These cases take you into the diverse world of politics and American society. Ranging from an article on how a little-known congressional staffer (later, President Lyndon B. Johnson) developed his political style to another article on what it is like to experience downward mobility, the cases here mostly offer an “inside” as opposed to theoretical or statistical look at the political landscape. The cases are very brief (and engaging) so that they can be read quickly for classroom discussion. Each reading is followed by a series of questions. In addition, some of the sections include a “Critic’s Corner” where a political cartoon is reproduced followed by a series of questions. The study guide section is designed to assist you in studying American politics and government. It will not only help you learn and retain the material in *The American Polity*, but will give you suggestions about where to go for additional information, and ideas about how to conduct research. Toward these ends there are chapter overviews, outlines, and four different kinds of review questions, readings and related questions as well as research projects for each chapter.

## Using the Study Guide Section

Most students who take American government begin the course thinking they will have little need for a study guide. Some are right; most are not. The intellectual tools you will be asked to employ while taking this course are reading, analytic thinking, and writing. The scope of the course and textbook make comprehension and retention a challenge. The study guide will assist you with reading by allowing you to evaluate your own comprehension and retention. These skills improve with practice, and many students will benefit from the kind of exercises provided in this study guide. In addition, the study guide will help you review for examinations, especially final examinations, whether they include completion, multiple choice, true/false, or essay questions. Finally, the study guide will help you think by asking you questions that require you to apply the information you have learned from the book. Because writing skills

are such an important part of a college education and are, perhaps, the single most important foundation of a successful professional career, I have devoted an entire section to it on pages xxv-xxxiii of this study guide.

Like reading, writing improves with practice. The first step in writing is to get ideas, and the study guide should help you pursue some of the ideas presented in the textbook, as well as some that may go beyond the lectures or text. If you will be writing research papers, the suggested readings and application at the end of each chapter should prove useful.

To use the guide most effectively you should use it as a companion to the basic text. Each study guide chapter corresponds to a chapter in the text. Before reading each chapter in the text, read the chapter overview and the list of key terms and concepts provided in the study guide. The study guide cannot substitute for a careful reading of the text. Effective performance in a course like American government is enhanced by staying current in the reading. If you are confused about something in the reading, you can ask about it during a class period. If you wait to read the text or study guide until just before examinations, you will not benefit from the insights your professor and classmates could have provided.

Each chapter of the study guide consists of six sections: Overview, Key Terms and Concepts, Chapter Outline, Review Questions, Further Investigation, and Applying Political Science. Here is how each section can help you.

## OVERVIEW

Before you read each chapter in the text, read the chapter overview in the study guide. It will alert you to the major themes and issues addressed in the chapter. The overview is short and does not pursue ideas in depth; that is the function of the chapter in the textbook. After reading the overview you will sense how the chapter fits together and what major themes will be addressed. This information should help you be a more careful reader. Be attentive to how the author supports his points, how the points relate to one another, and what the implications are for American government.

## KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Before reading the chapter, examine the list of key terms and concepts. These are important to understanding the subject as well as the vocabulary of political science. After reading each chapter you should be able to define and state the significance of each term and concept. The definitions are easy; they will come with the introduction of the concept in the text and can also be found in the glossary at the end of the text.

Understanding the significance of the concept is a different matter. Here you need to know why the term is important to an understanding of American government and politics. An example may help. In the chapter on Congress,

the committee system is discussed. *Standing committees* is one of the key terms. The definition of a standing committee would be “a subgroup of Congress whose membership is stable, subject area fixed, and whose task is to consider bills and conduct the day-to-day work of Congress.” But there is more than just this definition. Standing committees routinely organize into subcommittees, where the legislative process begins. Subcommittee and committee chairmen have important legislative powers. The significance of standing committees is that they are the workshops of Congress. They are based on the principle of specialization secured through division of labor.

It is more likely you will learn the significance of the key terms and concepts if you are on the lookout for them. Therefore, before you read the chapter I suggest you list the key terms and concepts on a sheet of paper; then, as you encounter them in the text, note the definition and significance of each. This will also prove useful when you are taking lecture notes. As your lecturer discusses these concepts, you can add additional insights to your study materials. Finally, when you are reviewing for examinations, you will be able to review quickly the major themes of the book and the course.

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

The chapter outline will assist your study in two ways. First, after you have read the chapter, go to the chapter outline and read the topic headings. They are written in a way intended to jog your memory. For example, if you just finished reading the chapter on the presidency and come to the heading in the chapter outline “The institutional presidency,” ask yourself the following: Could I answer a question on that topic? Do I remember what the institutional presidency is? If not, return to that section of the chapter and review the material.

Second, the chapter outline will enable you to review for examinations. Use the outline headings in this phase of your study just as you did after reading the chapter for the first time. Chapter titles and major headings provide you with concepts and values the author considers important. When you anticipate essay questions, for instance, these headings often become clues to what will appear on the exam. Again, if you are unsure of what the book said about one or another of the headings, turn to that section of the book and review the material.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

After checking your memory with the chapter outline, it is time to test yourself with the review questions. Each chapter in the study guide has four different types of questions: completion, true/false, multiple choice, and essay. Exams typically include some of each type of question, so practice each type. As with the chapter outline, I would suggest you use these exercises at least twice; so do *not* write your answers in the study guide. Go through the review ques-

tions a first time immediately after reading the chapter. If you have trouble answering the question, go on to the next question until you complete all of the review questions. Then check your answers against the answer key provided at the end of the chapter. For the questions you answered incorrectly, go back to the text and find the correct answer. To help you correct your answers, each question is followed by the page number on which the topic is discussed. Go through the review questions a second time when you are reviewing for an exam. This time write in the answers. As with the initial review, be sure to follow up on the questions you could not answer or answered incorrectly.

### **ESSAY QUESTIONS**

For each chapter I have provided two or three essay questions that relate to the subject of the chapter you have just read. Essay questions typically require you to integrate the facts and concepts you have learned. This section allows you to prepare effectively for exams by providing practice in organizing the materials in the text and lectures, thinking through your own answer or argument, and then writing an answer. (See our “Strategy for Essay Tests” discussion below.)

### **APPLYING POLITICAL SCIENCE**

For many, the American government course is their first course in political science. The text and lectures will introduce you to the kinds of questions political scientists ask and how they go about answering them. Where appropriate, I suggest some ways you can test the ideas presented in the book in a local setting or apply them to a research question that is presented in the chapter. Many of the other courses college students take require students to spend time in a laboratory. While that is not typical of political science, the study guide will give you ideas of how to use your community, library, and classmates as a type of political science laboratory.

### **Using Your Textbook**

Before you start reading your first assignment, take a few minutes to get to know the text and how it is organized. Textbooks like this one have headings and subheadings that highlight the points the author thinks deserve attention. Also look for the ways the author and publisher use graphs, diagrams, photographs, boxes, summaries, marginal side notes, and other aids to help you understand and remember the material.

Read the preface and the table of contents. Students often skip over the preface, but it can give the reader insights into how the book is organized, how the author intends to approach his subject, and whether the author has a dis-



tinctive point of view. Scanning the table of contents will give you a sense of how topics are related and the relative weight given to each.

The textbook also features study aids in the back. The index will help you locate subjects or names or information you wish to review. There you will also find a copy of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and its Preamble and Amendments. Finally, a glossary of essential terms and concepts is presented in the text. The glossary and index can be valuable tools as you review for examinations.

Your text presents a broad array of topics in its eighteen chapters. Because the book covers so many subjects and seeks to build a foundation for more advanced work in American government, it cannot go into any of the subjects as deeply as you might like. At the end of each chapter Professor Ladd has provided an annotated list of further readings from which you can learn more about subjects that specifically interest you. These books are likely to be in your college library.

## **Improving Reading Retention**

A large portion of the work college students do involves reading. Important to retaining the material you read is reading in the right atmosphere. Because you will want to take notes on your reading and minimize the distractions, I suggest you read the text and use the study guide in a quiet area where you have room to work. The college library is ideal, and it has the added benefit of containing the additional readings suggested in the study guide.

Any good textbook should broaden the student's vocabulary. Don't miss the opportunity to learn the definitions and usages of new words. Have a dictionary nearby. Increasing the number of words you understand and can use correctly will enhance the thinking and writing skills you will carry with you well beyond this course.

Reading a text is different from other reading you will do in that you are reading to learn material you will later be examined on. So read with questions in mind and attempt to find answers. Reading the chapter overview and key terms and concepts presented in this study guide will give you things to look for in your reading. Do not hesitate to make marginal notations or underline key passages. If confused about something, make a note of it; if it is not clarified later in the chapter, bring it up in class. Approach each topic and chapter systematically, using the aids provided in the study guide. Your retention and understanding will improve.

## Reading Charts and Graphs

One of the distinguishing features of Ladd's *The American Polity* is its extensive use of charts and graphs. This stems from the author's uncommon access to survey and other kinds of data. Professor Ladd is the director of the Roper Center, which houses one of the largest collections of social and political data in the world. The data presented by Professor Ladd in your text have been gathered by a wide variety of organizations, public and private. Ladd's access to and use of these data help us to understand past trends and give reasonable predictions for the future. The book's charts and graphs are useful in helping us visualize and, therefore, understand what the data mean.

Even though there is much truth to the adage that "a picture is worth a thousand words," it is also true that pictures can be used to present an exaggerated or distorted impression to the viewer. This is especially the case with charts and graphs. Therefore, you should read all graphical presentations of information carefully. This caution should not reinforce the common tendency of students to simply skip over graphical presentations in their textbook. If the author and editors have chosen to present information in charts and tables, it is important and merits your careful attention. Here in outline form are some important things to remember when reading graphs and charts:

### WHEN READING GRAPHS

1. Carefully read the graph's title, captions, legend and source notes. The *title* will tell you what the author thinks the graph is about. The *captions*, usually printed along the vertical and horizontal axes, tell you what is being measured. The *legend* is a short explanation of the symbols that might be employed in a graph. Finally, as a careful consumer of graphical information you will want to know where the data in the graph came from. That information will be found in the source note at the bottom of the table.
2. Study the grid or format of the table. What are the intervals on each axis of the table? What is the range of the data on both the vertical and horizontal axes?
3. Examine the configuration of the line on the graph. When and where does it change? Think about why.

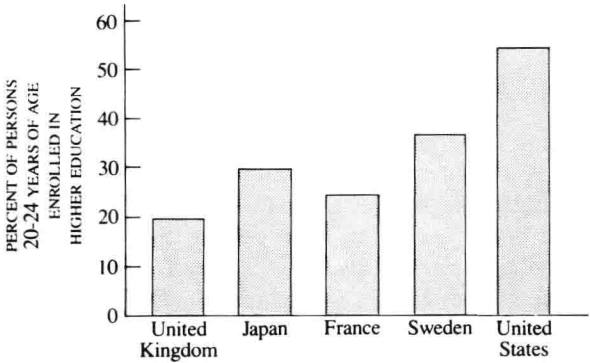
### WHEN READING TABLES

1. As with graphs, carefully read the table's title, captions, legend, and source note.
2. Inspect each column and row. Tables are organized horizontally (row) or vertically (column). You can tell which way the table is organized by looking to see in which direction the percentages add up to 100 percent.

3. When examining the table, look for differences and similarities in the data. Typically, tables are constructed to permit comparison of this sort.

Two basic types of data are presented in your text: numerical and categorical. The two are distinguished by whether the unit of analysis (what we are studying) is a number or a word. For example, if a person is asked in a survey about his age, height, or income, his response would be numerical, such as 35, 6 feet, or \$25,575. But if a person is asked his religious preference, he could respond by referring to a particular religion or say he has no religious preference at all. This is considered a categorical response. The exception to this is when we break numerical data down into categories, such as putting age into categories like: under 18, 18-24, 25-29, and so forth. Understanding the difference between numerical and categorical data is important because the type of chart or graph used depends heavily on what type of data are being analyzed.

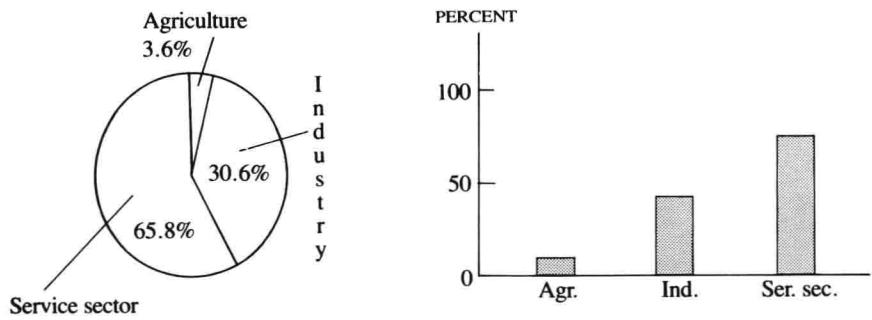
The most common graphs used for categorical data are bar graphs and pie charts. For example, below we have a duplicate of a bar graph found in the text, comparing percentages of persons 20-24 years of age enrolled in higher education across six nations.



The different categories (nations in this case), are listed across the horizontal axis while the percentage values are listed on the vertical axis. Vertical bars are constructed above each category with their heights corresponding to the percentage of 20-24 year olds enrolled in higher education for each country. The bars represent the actual frequency for each country at the time the survey was taken. The percentage for each country is relative to its own population of 20-24 year olds, so that differences in population size will be taken into consideration.

Another way to look at the percentages for categories is with a pie chart, such as these below. These divide the work force into three main groups and show what percentage of the work force is in each category for each country.

To permit you to compare a pie chart with a bar graph we have reproduced both below, using the same data on employment in the United States.



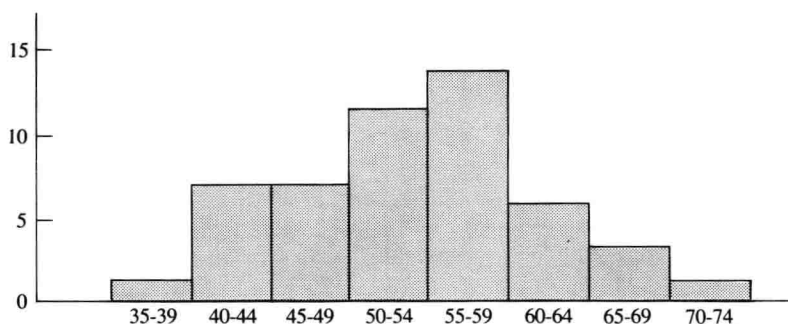
Both pie charts and bar graphs are effective ways to present categorical information. What determines the size of the slice of the pie or the length of the bar is the *relative frequency* for that category in the data set. The term *relative frequency* is used because we are comparing the frequency for that category relative to the total population of the study. Sometimes the actual frequencies or counts from the surveys are given, although this is less common because it often makes the table harder to read.

When numerical data have been gathered, most often a histogram or a frequency polygon is used to help show the distribution of the data. Histograms are similar to bar graphs because they are also usually created on a horizontal and a vertical axis. The difference is that the data are sectioned into continuous numerical intervals on the horizontal axis and a frequency tally is given for each interval. For example, we will take the turnout percentage for all fifty states for the 1984 election.

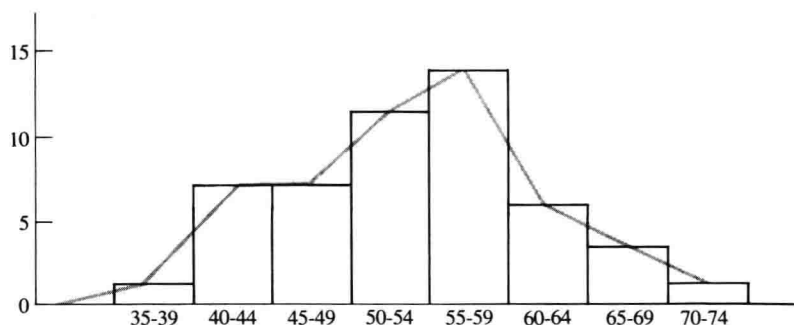
Our first step would be to divide the data into continuous intervals of equal length, say five, and take frequencies (simply count up the number) for each interval.

35-39.9	I	1
40-44.9	IIII II	7
45-49.9	IIII II	7
50-54.9	IIII IIII I	11
55-59.9	IIII IIII IIII	14
60-64.9	IIII I	6
65-69.9	IIII	4
70-74.9	I	1

Then a histogram is created to visualize the distribution of the data.



A frequency polygon is made by connecting the midpoints of the histogram with lines, as follows:



Frequency polygons are popular for monitoring trends over intervals of time.

## Preparing for and Taking Exams

A major purpose of this study guide is to improve your exam grades. Using the review questions, going back over the chapter summary and outline and quizzing yourself on the key terms and concepts will give you confidence in getting ready for that first midterm and the eventual final examination. I have already discussed how to use the study guide for this purpose. The one point I wish to underscore is that it will be most helpful if used at the time you read the chapter; followthrough—going back over information you did not assimilate

the first time—is also crucial. Systematic review is perhaps the most effective (and most neglected) study technique a student can use.

Because college examinations, especially essay examinations, are often intimidating to students, let's explore some ways to improve performance on the exam.

### **LEARN THE FACTS ABOUT THE EXAM**

The most important part of exam taking is learning the material. But different types of exams call for different strategies. Here are some questions you should be able to answer about how you will be examined:

1. What type of examination question will be asked: objective, essay, or both?
2. Which material, readings, and lectures will the exam cover?
3. Is there a penalty for guessing incorrectly?
4. How much time is allowed for the exam?

### **PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO DIRECTIONS**

Instructors differ in how they structure an exam, so follow directions very carefully. Read and reread the exam directions, and pay careful attention to any oral directions given. Most exams include a set of relative weights or points for each section. Use these as a device to apportion your time. If fifty of the one hundred points possible on the exam are for the essay, do not spend only one-fourth of your time on the essay part of the exam. Before you begin the exam, plan the amount of time you will devote to each part, and then budget your time accordingly. Verify the method of answering the question—underlining, circling, checking the correct answer, etc., unless it is clearly stated in the instructions.

### **STRATEGY FOR OBJECTIVE TESTS**

For each chapter in the study guide, I have included a set of objective questions that will help you refine your test-taking skills. I will discuss here some important strategies for taking objective tests which you can apply as you complete the review questions in this study guide.

In an objective exam find out in advance if there is a penalty for guessing. If only correct answers are counted and there is no penalty for wrong answers, you have nothing to lose by guessing. If, however, one-quarter or one-half of a point is subtracted for each incorrect answer from the total number you answer correctly, then you may do well to pass over questions you cannot answer.

Before you begin to answer questions, check to make sure your exam has all of the questions and that the pages are in the correct order. Because objective

tests often are several pages long, it is possible that one page was omitted when your exam was collated or that the pages are not in the correct order.

Perhaps the most important strategy for taking objective exams is reading each question carefully. Many students read things into questions. Others skip over key words or phrases. Objective exam questions sometimes include words like never, only, all, or always, which significantly modify their meaning. Look for double negatives and questions that are only partly correct. (This is especially a problem in true/false questions.) Read all of the alternatives before answering the question, because more than one of them may be correct. Ask yourself, what is the point of the question? If the answer is not obvious, start to exclude the answers that are clearly incorrect. If there is a penalty for guessing but you can exclude one or more of the options, you are probably wise to answer the question by choosing the most likely alternative.

If the correct answer is not apparent on the first reading, you should then eliminate the incorrect answers. You can do this by looking for alternatives that are inconsistent, illogical, or meaningless. Be alert to the fact that test items often will sound good, but in fact be incorrect. Sometimes one of the choices may make sense and even be true but is not an answer to the question. These and other problems are best understood in light of a few examples from this study guide. For each type of question, a short comment follows on the correct and incorrect answers.

#### FACTUAL QUESTION

*Democracy in America* was originally written in

- a. French.
- b. English.
- c. German.
- d. Italian.
- e. none of these.

This straightforward question requires simple recall of a fact—you either know it was written in French or you don't. You might be able to narrow it down to French and English if you recall that Tocqueville was a Frenchman who wrote about America (as the title of his book implies). On such questions it is often best to mark the answer that feels best and then move on, since prolonged contemplation will not likely help you determine the answer. In fact, the longer it takes to think about the question, the greater your chances of missing the correct answer are. The rule is: Read slowly and carefully but answer quickly. If you do not know the answer, go on to the next question. If time is at a premium, you should answer the questions you know best and later go back to the questions you have skipped.

**APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLE**

Z feels bad that A, who lives on her block, is always cheating B. She files suit against A on B's behalf. The court refuses to hear the suit because

- a. it is not justiciable.
- b. Z has no standing.
- c. there is no real controversy.
- d. Z has failed to fulfill the requirements of a class action suit.
- e. A has not broken the law.

Obviously, this specific question was not addressed in the text. However, the principles needed to answer it were. Justiciability deals with whether the issue is appropriate for judicial review. Since cheating is presumably against the law, the case is justiciable and *a* is incorrect. To attain standing, a party must show that he or she has sustained, or is being threatened with, real injury. Since Z has observed only A's cheating B, Z has no standing in the court and the court will therefore refuse to hear the suit. Therefore *b* is the correct answer. *C* is incorrect because there is real controversy; *d* is incorrect because a class action suit does not apply to this situation; *e* is incorrect because A has indeed broken the law by cheating.

**LOGICAL ELIMINATION**

Sometimes you can answer a question you know little or nothing about simply by logically eliminating false answers.

*Synonymous answers*

The so-called establishment region was the

- a. South.
- b. West.
- c. Sunbelt.
- d. Northeast.

As is often the case, this question includes two possible answers that mean virtually the same thing. Since the South (*a*) and the Sunbelt (*c*) describe essentially the same region, neither can be correct, since you would have to choose between them. The West, you might reason from your general knowledge of American history, was the last region to be settled and could hardly be considered the establishment region. By default, your answer is *d*, the Northeast.

*Contradictory answers*

In appointing predominantly conservative judges, Reagan has

- a. offended members of his own party in Congress.
- b. acted similarly to his predecessors.



- c. violated the independence of the judicial branch.
- d. behaved differently from any presidents before him.
- e. none of the above.

Careful examination of this set of options reveals two options that contradict each other: *b* and *d*. Not only do they contradict each other, they are totally exhaustive, that is, Reagan behaves either similarly to or differently from his predecessors, so you can forget options *a*, *c*, and *e*. Once you've narrowed it down to two, it requires knowledge to know that the correct answer is *b*.

### CONSISTENCY

The Commission on National Elections did not study which of the following issues?

- a. length of presidential campaigns
- b. high cost of campaigning
- c. party procedures for nominating candidates
- d. why more people don't vote
- e. possibility of a proportional system

Notice the word *not* in the question, making the answer an exception. From the title of the commission, you know that their work dealt primarily with elections. The first four questions all deal with election problems of a similar non-dramatic nature. The fifth option, the "possibility of a proportional system," involves a massive overhaul, going far beyond any of the other issues in scope. By exclusion, (*e*) is the correct choice.

### DANGEROUS MODIFIERS

The views of the president appointing federal judges are always to be reflected in the decisions handed down by those jurists.

- a. true
- b. false

This true or false question is extracted from the text verbatim, with the exception of one word, which has been changed. "Likely" became "always," and what was a true statement became false. It is a rare case in which events "always" or "never" happen a certain way; the odds are with you when you guess against the truthfulness of statements including these words. Similar all encompassing or extremely limiting adjectives are *all*, *only*, and *any*.

### STRATEGY FOR ESSAY TESTS

Often more than half the total points on an exam will be for the essay. Despite the importance of essay questions, most students do not prepare adequately for them. Here are some suggestions to help you improve your performance on essay examinations.