International Political Systems
The Political Spectrum

- All governments exist along a spectrum ranging from Liberal (The Political Left), and Conservative (the Political Right)
  - Socialism is far left, Libertarianism is far Right
- Grows out of economical, educational, and social conditions and experiences
Liberalism

• Supports active federal government in promoting individual welfare and supporting civil rights, and accepts peaceful political social change within the existing political system
  • In favor of more government role in society and progressive social stances
Conservativism

• Promotes a limited government role in helping individuals economically, supports traditional values and lifestyles, favors a more active role for government in promoting national security, and approaches change cautiously
  • Promotes a more limited government role and supports traditional values
Unitary Governments

• One central government is in control of smaller states or entities with very little to no shared power
  • Ex. The United Kingdom, China, Saudi Arabia

Centralized Power: Power held by a central authority
Forms of Unitary Governments

- Autocracy – Power typically held by one person or a small group of people
  - Dictatorship – Governmental power controlled by one person
  - Monarchy – Governmental power controlled by a hereditary king or queen.
  - Oligarchy – Governmental power controlled by a group of people or particular political party
  - Theocracy – Governmental power and religious power are linked one in the same
Federalist Governments

- Power is shared between a large national government and smaller state or provincial governments. Smaller entities are allowed some self-rule.
  - Ex. Australia, Brazil, Germany, the United States

De-Centralized Power: Power distributed away from the central authority
Forms of Federations

• Democratic – Government power derived from the people
  • Presidential – The President is constitutionally independent from the legislature
  • Parliamentary – Electors select representatives who then select a prime minister
  • Constitutional Monarchy – Power is constitutionally divided between a monarch and a parliament
  • Republic – Electors vote to select representatives to serve in the government
    • As opposed to a direct democracy where citizens vote directly on governmental issues
Confederations

• Power is mostly divided between the individual states with a much weaker central government
  • Ex. The Articles of Confederation, Confederate States of America