



PRINCIPLE OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Vocabulary Set 9

Equal Rights and Policy

Name:

Section:

Equal Rights

Affirmative action – Remedial action designed to overcome the effects of discrimination against minorities and women.

Class action suit – Lawsuit brought by an individual or group of people on behalf of all those similarly situated.

Commerce clause – The clause of the Constitution (Article I, Section 8, Clause 3) that gives Congress the power to regulate all business activities that cross state lines or affect more than one state or other nations.

De facto segregation – Segregation resulting from economic or social conditions or personal choice.

De jure segregation – Segregation imposed by law.

Due process clause – Clause in the Fifth Amendment limiting the power of the national government; similar clause in the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits the state governments from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

Equal protection clause - Clause in the Fourteenth Amendment that forbids any state to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. By interpretation, the Fifth Amendment imposes the same limitation on the national government. This clause is the major constitutional restraint on the power of governments to discriminate against persons because of race, national origin, or sex.

Jim Crow laws – State laws formerly pervasive throughout the South requiring public facilities and accommodations to be segregated by race; ruled unconstitutional.

Literacy test – Literacy requirements some states imposed as a condition of voting, generally used to disqualify black voters in the South; now illegal.

Majority-minority district – A congressional district created to include a majority of minority voters; ruled constitutional so long as race is not the main factor in redistricting.

Natural rights - The rights of all people to dignity and worth; also called *human rights*.

Poll tax – Tax required to vote; prohibited for national elections by the Twenty-Fourth Amendment (1964) and ruled unconstitutional for all elections in *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections* (1966).

Racial gerrymandering – The drawing of election districts so as to ensure that members of a certain race are a minority in the district; ruled unconstitutional in *Gomillion v. Lightfoot* (1960).

Restrictive covenant – A provision in a deed to real property prohibiting its sale to a person of a particular race or religion. Judicial enforcement of such deeds is unconstitutional.

White primary – Democratic party primary in the old “one-party South” that was limited to white people and essentially constituted an election; ruled unconstitutional in *Smith v. Allwright* (1944).

Women’s suffrage – The right of women to vote.

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Regulatory Policy

Antitrust legislation – Federal laws (starting with the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890) that try to prevent a monopoly from dominating an industry and restraining trade.

Closed shop - A company with a labor agreement under which union membership is a condition of employment.

Collective bargaining – Method whereby representatives of the union and employer determine wages, hours, and other conditions of employment through direct negotiation.

Congressional Budget Office (CBO) – An agency of Congress that analyzes presidential budget recommendations and estimates the cost of proposed legislation.

Deficit – The difference between the revenues raised annually from sources of income other than borrowing and the expenditures of government, including paying the interest on past borrowing.

Deregulation – A policy promoting cutbacks in the amount of Federal regulation in specific areas of economic activity.

Distributive policy – A type of policy that provides benefits to all Americans.

Environmental impact statement – Statement required by Federal law from all agencies for any project using Federal funds to assess the potential affect of the new construction or development on the environment.

Excise tax – Consumer tax on a specific kind of merchandise, such as tobacco.

Federal Reserve System – The system created by Congress in 1913 to establish banking practices and regulate currency in circulation and the amount of credit available. It consists of 12 regional banks supervised by the Board of Governors. Often called simply *the Fed*.

Fiscal policy – Government policy that attempts to manage the economy by controlling taxing and spending.

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) – An international trade organization with more than 130 members, including the United States and the People's Republic of China, that seeks to encourage free trade by lowering tariffs and other trade restrictions.

Inflation – A rise in the general price level (and decrease in dollar value) owing to an increase in the volume of money and credit in relation to available goods.

Iron triangle – A policy-making alliance that involves a very strong ties among a congressional committee, an interest group, and a Federal Department or agency.

Issue network – A policy-making alliance among loosely connected participants that comes together on a particular issue, then disbands.

Keynesian economics - Economic theory based on the principles of John Maynard Keynes stating that government spending should increase during business slumps and be curbed during booms.

Labor injunction – A court order forbidding specific individuals or groups from performing certain acts (such as striking) that the court considers harmful to the rights and property of an employer or community.

Laissez-faire economics – Theory that opposes governmental interference in economic affairs beyond what is necessary to protect life and property.

Monetarism – A theory that government should control the money supply to encourage economic growth and restrain inflation.

Monetary policy – Government policy that attempts to manage the economy by controlling the money supply and thus interest rates.

Monopoly - Domination of an industry by a single company; also the company that dominates the industry.

National debt – The total amount of money the Federal government has borrowed to finance deficit spending over the years.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) – Agreement signed by the United States, Canada, and Mexico in 1992 to form the largest free trade zone in the world.

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) – Presidential staff agency that serves as a clearinghouse for budgetary requests and management improvements for government agencies.

Offshoring – The practice of exporting U.S. jobs to lower paid employees in other nations.

Policy agenda – The informal list of issues that Congress and the president consider most important for action.

Progressive tax – A tax graduated so that people with higher incomes pay larger fraction of their income than people with lower incomes.

Protectionism - Policy of erecting trade barriers to protect domestic industry.

Public policy – A specific course of action taken by government to achieve a public goal.

Regressive tax – A tax whereby people with lower incomes pay a higher fraction of their income than people with higher incomes.

Regulation – Efforts by government to alter the free operation of the market to achieve social goals such as protecting workers and the environment.

Rule – The precise legal definition of how government will implement a policy.

Sales tax – General tax on sales transactions, sometimes exempting food and drugs.

Tariff – Tax levied on imports to help protect the nation's industries, labor, or farmers from foreign competition. It can also be used to raise additional revenue.

Tax expenditure – Loss of tax revenue due to Federal laws that provide special tax incentives or benefits to individuals or businesses.

Trade deficit – An imbalance in international trade in which the value of imports exceeds the value of exports.

Trust – A monopoly that controls goods and services, often in combinations that reduce competition.

Unemployment – The number of Americans who are out of work but actively looking for a job. The number does not usually include those who are not looking.

Union shop – A company in which new employees must join a union within a stated time period.

Value-added tax (VAT) – A tax on increased value of the product at each stage of production and distribution rather than just at the point of sale.

World Trade Organization (WTO) – International organization derived from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that promotes free trade around the world.

Aboukhadijeh, Feross. "Chapter 18: Making Economic and Regulatory Policy" StudyNotes.org. Study Notes, LLC., 17 Nov. 2012. Web. 27 Mar. 2018. <<https://www.apstudynotes.org/us-government/vocabulary/chapter-18-making-economic-and-regulatory-policy/>>.