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Political attitudes: The opinions people hold about the role of government and the specific programs and policies that their government should implement. Political culture: The combined set of political attitudes held by individuals within the same culture. Individualism: A social and political philosophy that promotes individual well-being over the well-being of society as a whole. Equality of opportunity: The belief that each person should have an equal chance at success and that no person should be limited by circumstances outside of her control. Equality of outcome: Having similar or equal results among individuals within a society; often contrasted with equality of opportunity. Free enterprise: The ability of individual people and businesses to make money with minimal interference by the government. Rule of law: The notion that everyone within a country, including government officials, are subject to its laws. Limited government: The belief that political officials and institutions should have significant constraints on their power. Political socialization: The process by which people form their political attitudes and beliefs. Social groups: Formal or informal groups of people who share similar characteristics and a common sense of identity. Generational effects: Significant historical or cultural events that can permanently affect the political attitudes of the people who lived through them. Life-cycle effects: Fluctuations in political beliefs that can occur as a result of life events that commonly occur at particular points in a typical lifespan. In order to continue enjoying our site, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human. Thank you very much for your cooperation. Political attitudes: The opinions people hold about the role of government and the specific programs and policies that their government should implement. Political culture: The combined set of political attitudes held by individuals within the same culture. Individualism: A social and political philosophy that promotes individual well-being over the well-being of society as a whole. Equality of opportunity: The belief that each person should have an equal chance at success and that no person should be limited by circumstances outside of her control. Equality of outcome: Having similar or equal results among individuals within a society; often contrasted with equality of opportunity. Free enterprise: The ability of individual people and businesses to make money with minimal interference by the government. Rule of law: The notion that everyone within a country, including government officials, are subject to its laws. Limited government: The belief that political officials and institutions should have significant constraints on their power. Political socialization: The process by which people form their political attitudes and beliefs. Social groups: Formal or informal groups of people who share similar characteristics and a common sense of identity. Generational effects: Significant historical or cultural events that can permanently affect the political attitudes of the people who lived through them. Life-cycle effects: Fluctuations in political beliefs that can occur as a result of life events that commonly occur at particular points in a typical lifespan. WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite the country's deep political polarization, most Americans share many core beliefs about what it means to be an American, according to a new poll. The poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that about 9 in 10 U.S. adults say the right to vote, the right to equal protection under the law and the right to privacy are extremely important or very important to the United States' identity as a nation. The survey also found that 84% feel the same way about the freedom of religion. The results, which included perspectives on a number of different freedoms and rights, have only small variances between Republicans and Democrats except on the right to bear arms, which Republicans are more likely to see as core to the nation's identity. The overall findings are striking because they come at a time of extreme partisanship when political agreements seem rare and concerns are heightened over the potential for violence during a volatile presidential election year. "If you get a bunch of normal people at random and put them in a room together and chat about issues, there's a lot more convergence than you might imagine," said Michael Albertus, a political science professor at the University of Chicago. A more pessimistic assessment of the country was reflected in another finding — that only about 3 in 10 Americans believe the nation's democracy is functioning well. About half say the U.S. is a poorly functioning democracy, while 14% say the U.S. is not a democracy. The tension between the broad consensus on the country's fundamental values and discontent with how well its form of government is working is not a surprise, experts say. "Part of it is really our leaders are not reflecting the electorate, and they behave in a way that's much more polarized than what the electorate is," said Lilliana Mason, a political scientist at Johns Hopkins University. Most Americans, she said, "are pretty moderate, but they've been riled up to hate people of the other party for being different from them culturally, racially and religiously." The AP-NORC poll also found broad agreement on the importance of some key values for the U.S.'s identity as a country. About three-quarters of U.S. adults agree that a democratically elected government is extremely or very important, and about 8 in 10 think the same about the ability of people living in the U.S. to get good jobs and achieve the American dream. But what achieving that dream means — and which values are most fundamental to American culture — isn't something all Americans agree on. Democrats are more likely than Republicans — 71% to 38% — to believe that the ability to come to the U.S. from elsewhere in the world to escape violence or find economic opportunities is core to the country's identity. A majority of Republicans, 58%, think a culture grounded in Christian values and beliefs is an essential characteristic, compared to only 18% of Democrats. Juan Sierra, 51, a naturalized citizen whose family immigrated from the Dominican Republic after a hurricane destroyed his father's cement business, said it is very important to him that the U.S. be seen as a place of opportunity. The Capitol is seen as water sprinklers soak the National Mall on a hot summer morning in Washington, July 15, 2022. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite) The industrial technician in Port St. Lucie, Florida, said he believes democracy is working and will continue to do so "as long as there are good people in government." Sierra also said it was extremely important that people have freedom of religion, although he had concerns over the nation's identity being tied to Christianity. "We're seeing what happens right now when laws are passed and decisions are made based on someone's religion," he said, citing the Alabama Supreme Court ruling in February that frozen embryos can be considered children and be afforded legal protections, a decision that temporarily halted IVF procedures in the state. Susan Johnson, a 76-year-old Republican living in the Dallas suburbs, said the nation's standing as a beacon to others who need refuge is very important, but said that could not override concerns about border security. "We need people working," she said. "We just need them to come the right way." Johnson also said she believes it's extremely important that the nation's identity be grounded in spirituality. "Whether or not you're Mormon or a Muslim or a Christian, they just have to have some higher power to reach up to," she said. "The country is going to fall apart if we don't believe in God." The poll found few divisions on democracy as a system in theory, but it identified one notable gap: younger Americans between the ages of 18 to 29 were less likely than those 60 and older to say the U.S. is a well-functioning democracy. They're also less likely than older Americans to believe that some characteristics are essential to the U.S.'s character as a nation, including having a democratically elected government. About 6 in 10 younger adults see this as important, compared to about 9 in 10 older adults. Palakjot Singh, a 21-year-old college student in Fresno, California, identified himself as a Republican and said he had a better quality of life when Donald Trump was president. He said the U.S. is not a well-functioning democracy in part because people are not open to debating different points of view compared to previous generations. "There is not good communication," he said. "Nobody is sitting together trying to get to one point." Howard Lavine, a political science professor at the University of Minnesota, said the generational split is understandable. Many younger people don't remember a time when those with opposing views and from different political backgrounds could get together and "come over to your house." Their frame of reference is the hyper partisanship of the Trump years, he said. Joe Lagle, 55, a retired Air Force veteran in Colorado Springs who said he has not voted for either President Joe Biden or Trump, said the nation's various rights are "all important" but believes they are being eroded by intolerance and well-meaning but shortsighted people. Mike Maloy, 41, an engineer in Greensboro, North Carolina, said having those rights and freedoms "doesn't necessarily mean the U.S. is a functioning democracy." "Everything is run by a handful of people and their corporations," he said. "That's not a democracy." A Democrat, Maloy cited as an example this year's presidential primary in North Carolina, when Biden was the lone candidate on the ballot. He called that "frustrating" and said the result was that voters "had no choice." The poll of 1,282 adults was conducted March 21-25, 2024, using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 3.8 percentage points. Associated Press polling writer Linley Sanders contributed to this report. The Associated Press receives support from several private foundations to enhance its explanatory coverage of elections and democracy. See more about AP's democracy initiative here. The AP is solely responsible for all content. Connecting the application of political science methods to the development of social and economic policies that Americans support, advocate for, and adopt is foundational to understanding the ideologies of political parties and patterns of political participation. American political beliefs are shaped by founding ideals, core values, linkage institutions (i.e., elections, political parties, interest groups, and the media in all its forms), and the changing demographics of citizens. These beliefs about government, politics, and the individual's role in the political system influence the creation of public policies. Unit 4 Study Guide Textbook Chapters Chapter 6 Court Cases Listen to this study note Study Guide Overview This AP US Government study guide covers core American government principles: individualism (classical vs. modern), equality of opportunity (formal vs. substantive), free enterprise, rule of law, and limited government. It explores different interpretations of each principle and how they connect, impacting political debates. The guide includes practice multiple-choice, short-answer, and free-response questions focused on applying these concepts. Page 2 Flashcard Study Guide Question Bank Classical vs. Modern Individualism? Classical: Freedom with responsibility, limited government. Modern: Self-expression, equal opportunity. Classical vs. Modern Individualism? Classical: Freedom with responsibility, limited government. Modern: Self-expression, equal opportunity. Formal vs. Substantive Equality of Opportunity? Formal: Equal access, individual responsibility. Substantive: Equal outcomes, address inequalities. Free Enterprise (Strong) vs. (Limited)? Strong: Limited regulation, business thrives. Limited: Regulations to protect consumers/environment. Rule of Law (Broad) vs. (Narrow)? Broad: All subject to law, independent judiciary. Narrow: Protect property rights, stable business. Limited Gov (Strict) vs. (Moderate)? Strict: Constitutionally allowed, smaller government. Moderate: Protect rights, social justice. Individualism vs. Equality of Opportunity? Individualism: Focus on individual responsibility. Equality: Focus on addressing inequalities. Free Enterprise vs. Limited Government? Free Enterprise: How much should the government regulate the economy? Limited Government: Should it be hands-off or more involved? Rule of Law vs. Limited Government? Rule of Law: How do we balance the need for order? Limited Government: Protect individual liberties? Classical Individualism vs. Modern Individualism on LGBTQ+ rights? Classical: May emphasize traditional values and civic duty. Modern: Strongly supports individual choice and protection of LGBTQ+ rights. Formal vs. Substantive Equality of Opportunity in Education? Formal: Equal access to schools. Substantive: Addressing funding disparities to ensure equal outcomes. What is the goal of Affirmative Action? To address past and present systemic inequalities by providing opportunities to underrepresented groups. What is the purpose of Minimum Wage Laws? To ensure workers receive a basic standard of living and to reduce income inequality. What is the goal of Deregulation? To reduce government intervention in the economy and promote business growth. What is the aim of Tax Cuts for Businesses? To stimulate economic activity by increasing investment and job creation. What is the aim of Environmental Protection Regulations? To protect natural resources and public health by limiting pollution and regulating business practices. What is the purpose of Head Start programs? To provide early childhood education and support to children from low-income families, promoting substantive equality. What do supporters of States' Rights advocate? They advocate for lower taxes and less federal intrusion on individual lives, aligning with strict interpretation of limited government. What is the purpose of the Civil Rights Act? To prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, promoting equality of opportunity. What is the purpose of the Voting Rights Act? To protect and expand voting rights, particularly for minority groups, addressing historical barriers to political participation. What is the aim of Contract Law? To provide a stable business environment by enforcing agreements and protecting property rights. Define Classical Individualism. Emphasis on individual freedoms, autonomy, and civic duties; limited government. Define Modern Individualism. Focus on self-expression and personal fulfillment; government ensures equal opportunity. Define Formal Equality of Opportunity. Equal access to opportunities, individual responsibility, merit-based systems. Define Substantive Equality of Opportunity. Equal outcomes are as important as equal access; government addresses systemic inequalities. Define Free Enterprise (Strong Interpretation). Limited government intervention; businesses thrive without government interference. Define Free Enterprise (Limited Interpretation). Government regulations protect consumers, workers, and the environment. Define Rule of Law (Broad Interpretation). All individuals and institutions are subject to the same laws; independent judiciary. Define Rule of Law (Narrow Interpretation). Protecting property rights and a stable business environment; limited government intervention. Define Limited Government (Strict Interpretation). Government only does what the Constitution specifically allows; smaller government. Define Limited Government (Moderate Interpretation). Government protects individual rights and civil liberties; active role in social justice.