



Federalism Flashcards

Part of the AP U.S. Government collection

Overview

This resource contains a collection of 26 flashcards that will help students master key Federalism concepts that may be covered on the AP U.S. Government exam.

These are not actual test questions, nor do they involve much “application” of knowledge. Instead, they focus on the basic factual and conceptual knowledge that students must first internalize if they are to successfully formulate logical responses to multiple-choice or essay questions on the eventual exam.

Brainscape has created this content in partnership with several AP U.S. Government teachers and tutors, as well as ex-executives from test prep publishers such as Kaplan and The Princeton Review. The material is as comprehensive as possible, while still being broken down into small bite-sized chunks that make it easy to study. We have included a variety of question formats to help students’ minds encode the knowledge as deeply as possible.

How to Use This Resource

Teachers and students can use these flashcards in a variety of creative ways. Below are a few common use cases:

1. Post this PDF on your class website, so students can download it on their own, and potentially print their own copy as a study aid (and even *cut out* individual flashcards)
2. Use these questions as inspiration for your own quiz questions
3. Use these flashcards as a “game”, where one student (or group of students) asks another student (or group) a random question, and keeps score of how well the questions are being answered
4. Encourage students to use the digital version of the flashcards (see below)

Online and Mobile Version

All of these flashcards are available to study on the Brainscape website (brainscape.com) and in our mobile app(s). Brainscape’s “smart flashcards” study system uses our unique “Confidence-Based Repetition” method, which repeats questions in a progressive pattern based on students’ personalized path of mastery. Teachers can track students’ progress and identify students who need more guidance.

Students can study a portion of Brainscape’s premium flashcards for FREE and can gain unlimited access for a small fee. Students can also use Brainscape to create & share their own supplementary flashcards (which is ALWAYS FREE).

If you are interested in a bulk class license for Brainscape’s web & mobile study system, please contact info@brainscape.com, and we can set up some time for a call.

#	Question	Answer
1	Define: federalism	<p>Federalism is a form of government in which power is divided between a central political authority and its constituent political units.</p> <p>The United States follows federalism, because power resides jointly in the federal government and in the government of the several states.</p>
2	Define: confederation	<p>A confederation is a system of government in which the states or territories retain ultimate authority, except for those powers specifically delegated to a national government.</p> <p>Since they are decentralized, confederations are weaker on a national level than a federal system of government.</p>
3	How does a federal system of government differ from a confederate system?	<p>In a federal system, individual states and the national government share ultimate authority, meaning that in some areas the federal government is supreme, while in others the state governments are supreme.</p> <p>In a confederation, the state governments are considered supreme, except for those powers specifically delegated to the federal government.</p>
4	What are delegated powers?	<p>Delegated powers are those powers specifically given to the national government.</p> <p>Examples include the power to "fix the Standard of Weights and Measures," "establish Post Offices and Post Roads," and "regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes."</p>
5	According to the Constitution, the federal government guarantees to the states that they will have what type of government?	<p>a republican form of government</p> <p>The Constitution requires the federal government to guarantee that the states have a "Republican form of government."</p>

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6	Define: implied powers	<p>Implied powers are those powers reasonably inferred from the delegated powers listed in the Constitution and stem from the General Welfare and Necessary and Proper clauses.</p> <p>As an example, the power to charter a National Bank was held to be a legitimate implied power in <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> (1819).</p>
7	What is meant by the term "inherent powers" as used to describe the powers of the presidency?	Inherent powers refer to powers that can be inferred from the president's position as the head of a sovereign nation, such as the power to declare neutrality or enter into executive agreements.
8	Powers that belong to both the state and federal governments are known as _____.	<p>concurrent powers</p> <p>In several areas, state and federal governments have overlapping powers, which either can use. For instance, both the state and federal governments may tax their citizens.</p>
9	What term describes powers that the federal government cannot exercise, such as passing ex post facto laws or bills of attainder?	<p>prohibited powers</p> <p>These powers are known as prohibited powers and are specifically denied to the federal government by the Constitution.</p>
10	What does the Tenth Amendment provide?	The Tenth Amendment refers to the powers reserved to the states. Under the Tenth Amendment, the states can engage in activities such as establishing schools, regulating intrastate commerce, and establishing licensing requirements for various professions, such as dentistry or law.
11	What constitutional article governs interstate relations?	<p>Interstate relations are governed by Article IV, which requires states to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognize legal documents from other states (Full Faith and Credit) • not discriminate against out-of-state citizens (Privileges and Immunities) • extradite individuals accused of criminal violations (Extradition)

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12	Pursuant to Article IV of the Constitution, states can enter into interstate compacts. What are interstate compacts?	Interstate compacts are agreements between states to resolve common problems or issues. As an example, seven states signed the Colorado River Compact, which governs water rights to the Colorado River.
13	What are some of the advantages of the federalist form of government established by the Constitution?	<p>Federalism has numerous advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • states serve as laboratories for democracy, experimenting with solutions that affect both national and state government • avoids concentration of political power in one entity • states serve as training grounds for future national leaders • states are closer to the people, and theoretically better able to respond to local concerns
14	What disadvantages are inherent in federalism as established in the Constitution?	<p>Federalism does have some disadvantages, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many offices and agencies can be duplicative • conflicts of authority may arise between local and national governments • national, state, and local governments may be overly complex
15	What constitutional provision places the federal government above state governments when applicable?	<p>The Supremacy Clause</p> <p>Found in Article IV, the Supremacy Clause establishes the preeminence of the federal government over state governments.</p> <p>The clause reads "This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof...shall be the supreme law of the land."</p>

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16	Which Supreme Court case established Congress' implied powers?	<p>McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)</p> <p>In McCulloch, the state of Maryland attempted to tax a federally established bank. The Court held that it was within the federal government's implied powers to create a bank, that the power to tax was the power to destroy, and that a state could not destroy a federal institution.</p>
17	Describe: Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)	<p>In Gibbons v. Ogden, the Court held that Congress had the power to regulate interstate commerce under the Constitution's Commerce Clause. The Court held that commerce is more than merely trade, it is also intercourse between the states.</p> <p>At issue in Gibbons was a state law regarding steamboat navigation that conflicted with a federal law. The Court found that Congress had exclusive national power over interstate commerce under the Commerce Clause.</p>
18	Between the Constitution's enactment and 1932, the concept of dual federalism governed relations between the federal government and the states. What is dual federalism?	<p>Dual federalism, also known as "layer cake" federalism, holds that the federal government and the state governments are each sovereign in their own spheres; states have authority over state matters, and the federal government has authority over national matters.</p> <p>Dual federalism implies a limited national government, because the federal government only exercises authority in those areas specified in the Constitution.</p>
19	During the New Deal and Great Society expansions of the federal government (roughly the 1930s to the 1960s) the concept of cooperative federalism emerged. What is cooperative federalism?	<p>Cooperative federalism, also known as "marble cake" federalism, holds that state and federal governments work together to jointly create policies and solve problems.</p> <p>An example of cooperative federalism is the national highway system, which was the result of joint federal and state efforts beginning in the 1950s.</p>

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20	Define: competitive federalism	<p>Competitive federalism refers to a school of thought that views states and cities as competing with each other to offer benefits to citizens, and is based on the principle that citizens "vote with their feet."</p> <p>For instance, State A may enact high taxes which it uses to fund social programs and the arts, while State B offers low taxation, but little support for social programs and the arts. Based on personal preference, a citizen can choose State A or State B.</p>
21	Define: devolution	<p>Devolution refers to the transfer of programs, previously conducted on the federal level, to the state level. In recent years, federal programs such as health care, job training, welfare, and housing have passed to the state level, usually accompanied by grants.</p>
22	During the 1970s and continuing to the present, the concept of new federalism predominated state and federal relations. What is new federalism?	<p>New federalism emphasizes devolution (the transfer of power to political subunits), and places more responsibility on the states to determine how federal grant money will be spent.</p>
23	What do block grants provide?	<p>Block grants are grants provided to a given state for a specific purpose, such as road construction or public health concerns.</p> <p>Block grants typically come with fewer requirements attached than a grant-in-aid and focus on a specific purpose, rather than a specific policy.</p>
24	What are categorical grants?	<p>Categorical grants are funds granted by Congress to states to be used for specific, narrowly defined purposes, or "categories." They can be funded on a project or formula basis and come with strict requirements.</p> <p>One program funded by a categorical grant is the food stamp program.</p>

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25	How do project grants work?	<p>Project grants are federal grants for specific projects, and have limitations that require their use for those projects. Many times, project grants require state and local governments to raise matching funds.</p> <p>For instance, the federal government may provide a project grant for a new hospital in a rural area, provided that the state and local government also contribute funds.</p>
26	What is a formula grant?	<p>A formula grant is a grant whose total value is calculated based upon a formula included in the legislation establishing the grant.</p> <p>As an example, the amount of the grant could be tied to the number of farmers in a state; thus a grant amount would be higher in Iowa than in Maine.</p>