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FRQ Thesis 1: The framers believed that a constitution was necessary to create a stable political system that would protect individual rights.

Develop an argument that takes a position on whether the process to amend the United States Constitution should be simplified.

- **Fed 10**
- **Brutus 1**
- **Article V**

Thesis examples – paragraph 1 – can be 1 sentence!

The process to amend the United States Constitution should be made easier, as the Constitution is a living document that needs to adjust to modern-day America.

The process to amend the United States Constitution should stay as it is, as the framers deliberately made the process difficult to prevent changes made by the whims of the people.

Task B: The response provides one piece of evidence from the foundational documents listed that is accurately linked to the topic of the question

The Federalist 10, Madison discusses factions and argues that representative government in a large republic is the way to solve factions.

- Brutus 1 fears the abuse of power by a large federal government and favors having the states retain more power.**
- Article V of the United States Constitution outlines the different processes the framers created for amending the Constitution.**

Task C: response correctly supports the claim or thesis using one piece of relevant evidence from the foundational documents listed.

- In The Federalist 10, Madison warns of the danger of factions. Since representative government has the potential to degenerate into conflicting factions, it is best that the framers created a process that makes it hard to change the Constitution. This prevents the Constitution from being changed because of any whim of the people.**
- Brutus 1 argues that the state governments should have more power relative to the national government. The current amendment process works well because it grants the states' power over the changes that are made to the Constitution. It prevents all the power from being amassed in the hands of the federal government.**
- Article V of the United States Constitution outlines the process for amending the Constitution. The framers deliberately instituted a system of checks and balances in the amendment process so it would not be too easy to change the Constitution. Any proposed amendment by Congress must be approved or proposed by the states, thus making sure that the will of the people is reflected by every change.**

Task D: The response correctly supports the claim or thesis using two pieces of relevant evidence.

Since the Constitution is a living, breathing document, it needs to be made more flexible to address the political issues of modern America. The current amendment process makes it too hard for good ideas, such as the Equal Rights Amendment, to be added to the Constitution, because of the number of states that are needed to approve any amendment.

One of the reasons the Constitution is the oldest document in the world is that its amending process allows for change, but that change is not made easily. It even allows bad amendments to be reversed, as is the case with the Eighteenth Amendment, which banned the sale of alcohol in the United States. The amendment process outlined in the Constitution allowed the Twenty-first Amendment to be passed 14 years later, which overturned the Eighteenth.

Thesis FRQ 2: The United States Constitution establishes a federal system of government. Under federalism, policy making is shared between national and state governments. Over time, the powers of the national government have increased relative to those of the state governments.

Develop an argument about whether the expanded powers of the national government benefits or hinders policy making.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

The Articles of Confederation

Brutus 1

The Federalist 10

Task A: The thesis makes a defensible claim that establishes a line of reasoning as about whether the expanded powers of national government benefits or hinders policy making.

Examples might include the following:

- The expanded powers of the national government have made it more efficient, and if states had more power it would be dangerous.**
- The expanded powers of the national government benefit policy making because of the strength of the Constitution, the increase of cooperative federalism, and the advantages of fiscal federalism.**

Task B2: Uses one piece of specific and relevant evidence to support the argument.

Examples might include the following:

- The U.S. has already tried giving states more power than the national government, and it has proved to be ineffective. The Articles of Confederation are a prime example of why a strong national government is better. With the Articles, the government could do very little. It made the states more independent by allowing them to have their own currency and impose their own taxes.**

Task B3: The response provides two pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support the argument.

NOTE: To earn 3 points, the response must use one of the foundational documents listed in the prompt.

Examples might include the following:

- According to Federalist 70, a strong executive benefits the country because it is easier for one person than a group to make decisions, and someone is held accountable.**

Task C: The response correctly explains why the evidence supports the claim or thesis.

Examples might include the following:

- The Articles of Confederation made it harder to pass laws because each state has very different agendas, and it required over a majority of them to agree. To amend, it required a unanimous decision. This makes it nearly impossible to add a new amendment to change policy.**
- This efficiency and accountability from a strong executive benefits policy making.**

Thesis FRQ 3: In an effort to balance free speech rights with the need to create safe learning environments for a diverse group of students, some public universities have established free speech zones on their campuses. Within the zones students are permitted to protest, post signs, and engage freely in the expression of their opinions. Outside the zones, however, students are expected to avoid speech that could be seen as offensive or obscene. Many have criticized these zones for limiting free speech and have called into question the constitutionality of designated zones for free speech.

Develop an argument either for or against the use of free speech zones on public college campuses.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- **The First Amendment**
- **The Declaration of Independence**

Task B1: Provides one piece of evidence that is accurately linked to the topic of the question.

Examples might include the following:

- The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and assembly as a basic civil liberty to all American citizens.**
- The Declaration of Independence is a document in which the colonists cited grievances and specific rights, including the right to assembly, petition, and representation, to justify their separation from the tyrannical government in England.**

Task B2: Provides one piece of specific and relevant evidence to support the claim or thesis.

Examples might include the following:

- The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech. Placing limitations on speech to make others feel more comfortable is not a good enough reason to limit a constitutional right.**
- The First Amendment is not an absolute right and therefore some limitations are permissible.**
- Free speech zones violate the spirit of the Declaration of Independence, which itself was an exercise of free speech against an expansive and tyrannical government.**

Task B3: Provides two pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support the claim or thesis.

- **Fundamental to American political culture is the idea that each individual is entitled to an opinion. Each person should be able to express that opinion free of punishment. Free speech zones tread dangerously into territory where the majority has the power to shut down opinions it does not agree with at the expense of the rights of the individual.**
- **No constitutional right is absolute. The Second Amendment guarantees the right to bear arms, but there are reasonable restrictions on firearms. The Fourth Amendment guarantees that no person should be searched without a warrant, but common sense exceptions have been upheld for that as well, particularly if the person is caught in the act of committing a crime. Likewise, speech that is incendiary and likely to jeopardize public safety or promote violence can be limited.**

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Task C: Explains why the evidence supports the claim or thesis.

- Free speech promotes better government through the marketplace of ideas. While allowing free speech on college campus poses obvious challenges, such as the likelihood of students' hearing messages that may be deemed offensive, it also provides students with the opportunity to respond to those messages.**
- Universities are a space where students can explore ideas, gain critical skills and education, and develop their personal identities. For one to have a successful professional life, higher education is a necessary step along the way. To allow that environment to be infiltrated by those promoting hate is a tangible threat to the future of these spaces. It is necessary to create a campus free of hate. If there are some who want to engage in debates, the free speech zones create opportunities to do that in a space separate from the rest of the university.**

Thesis Based FRQ 4: As part of the blueprint for checks and balances, the United States Constitution outlines a procedure for Congress to impeach and remove public officials, including the president of the United States.

Develop an argument on whether the congressional procedure outlined in the Constitution for impeachment and removal is an effective check on the president, too weak a check on the president, or too strong a check on the president.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

Brutus 1

The Federalist 51

The Federalist 70

Task A: The thesis makes a defensible claim establishing a line of reasoning on whether the congressional procedure outlined in the Constitution for impeachment and removal is an effective check on the president, too weak a check on the president, or too strong a check on the president.

- The procedure for impeachment is too weak of a check because it requires a two-thirds majority in the Senate to remove a president.**

- The procedure is too strong a check because Congress tends to be politically polarized and this can lead to abuse.**

- The procedure is an effective check because the removal of a president is a serious matter which should require that both chambers of Congress are involved in the process.**

Task B1: The response provides one piece of evidence that is accurately linked to the topic of the question.

Examples might include the following:

- Brutus 1 expresses a concern over the power of the executive.**
- Federalist 51 is about checks and balances.**

Task B2: Uses one piece of specific and relevant evidence to support the claim or thesis.

- **Brutus 1 argues that the executive branch will become too powerful. This supports the argument that the process for checking the executive branch is too weak.**
- **Federalist 51 argues in favor of a balance of power, and suggest that the impeachment power of Congress strikes an appropriate balance between the executive and the legislative branches.**
- **Federalist 70 argues in favor of a strong an active executive branch. However, to meet such expectations, the extensive authority of Congress to remove the president perhaps should be reconsidered.**

Task B3: The response provides two pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support the claim or thesis.

Examples might include the following:

- Brutus 1 argues that the executive branch will become too powerful. This supports the argument that the process for checking the executive branch is too weak.**
- Federalist 51 argues in favor of a balance of power, and suggest that the impeachment power of Congress strikes an appropriate balance between the executive and the legislative branches.**
- Federalist 70 argues in favor of a strong an active executive branch. However, to meet such expectations, the extensive authority of Congress to remove the president perhaps should be reconsidered.**

Task C: The response correctly explains why the evidence supports the claim or thesis.

- The argument in Brutus 1 follows the logic of Brutus' concern over the rights of people in an extended republic, which might be easily discarded by a reckless president.**
- Federalist 51 argues that ambition must counteract ambition between the branches of government. That balanced approach is embodied in the impeachment process, which includes all branches of government if the president is being impeached.**
- Federalist 70 argues for a strong single executive. The actions of the president will likely create tension with Congress which could invite politically driven impeachment. Under the current plan, it seems impeachment can be used as a tool for Congressional leaders to grab power and thwart executive assertiveness.**