

APGoPo – Unit 3

CITIZEN BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS VOCAB

Ch. 7 – Public Opinion, Ideology, Participation, and Voting

1. **Political socialization** – The process – most notably in families and schools – by which we develop our political attitudes, values, and beliefs.
2. **Selective exposure** – Individuals choosing to access media with which they agree or avoiding media with which they disagree.
3. **Attentive public** – Citizens who follow public affairs carefully.
4. **Public opinion** – The distribution of individual preferences or evaluations of a given issue, candidate, or institution within a specific population.
5. **Random sample** – In this type of sample, every individual has unknown and random chance of being selected.
6. **Margin of error** – Rate of error in a random sampling – usually +/- 3% for a sample of at least 1,500 individuals.
7. **Intensity** – How strongly people feel about certain political issues.
8. **Latency** – Political opinions that exist but have not been fully expressed.
9. **Salience** – Extent to which people believe issues are relevant to them.
10. **Political ideology** – A consistent pattern of beliefs about political values and the role of government.
11. **Liberalism** – A belief that government can and should achieve justice and equality of opportunity.
12. **Conservatism** – A belief in private property and free enterprise.
13. **Social conservative** – Focus less on economics and more on morality and lifestyle.
14. **Socialism** – A governmental system where some of the means of production are controlled by the state.
15. **Communism** – A belief that the state owns property in common for all people and a single political party that represents the working classes controls the government.
16. **Libertarianism** – An ideology that cherishes individual liberty and insists on minimal government, promoting a free market economy, a noninterventionist foreign policy, and an absence of regulation in moral, economic, and social life.
17. **Voter registration** – System designed to reduce voter fraud by limiting voting to those who have established eligibility to vote by submitting the proper documents, including proof of residency.
18. **General election** – Elections in which voters elect officeholders.
19. **Primary election** – Elections in which voters determine party nominees.
20. **Presidential election** – Elections held in years when the president is on the ballot.
21. **Midterm election** – Elections held midway between presidential elections.
22. **Off-year elections** – Elections held in odd-numbered calendar years.
23. **Turnout** – The proportion of the voting age public that votes, sometimes defined as the number of registered voters that vote.
24. **Party identification** – An informal and subjective affiliation with a political party that most people acquire in childhood.
25. **Candidate appeal** – How voters feel about a candidate's background, personality, leadership ability, and other personal qualities.
26. **Prospective issue voting** – Voting based on what a candidate pledges to do in the future about an issue if elected.
27. **Retrospective issue voting** – Holding incumbents, usually the president's party, responsible for their records on issues, such as the economy or foreign policy.

Ch. 8 – Campaigns and Elections: Democracy in Action

1. **Winner-take-all system** – An election system in which the candidate with the most votes wins.
2. **Single-member district** – An electoral district in which voters choose one representative or official.
3. **Proportional representation** – Election system in which each party running receives the proportion of legislative seats corresponding to its proportion of the vote.
4. **Electoral College** – Electoral system used in electing the president and vice president, in which voters vote for electors pledged to cast their ballots for particular party's candidates.
5. **Safe seat** – Elected office that is predictably won by one party or the other, so the success of the party's candidate is almost taken for granted.
6. **Coattail effect** – The boost that candidates may get in an election because of the popularity of candidates above them on the ballot, especially the president.
7. **Candidate appeal** – How voters feel about a candidate's background, personality, leadership ability, and other personal qualities.
8. **Name recognition** – Incumbents have an advantage over challengers in election campaigns because voters are more familiar with them, and incumbents are more recognizable.
9. **Caucus** – A meeting of local party members to choose party officials or candidates for public office and to decide the platform.
10. **National party convention** – A national meeting of delegates elected at primaries, caucuses, or state conventions who assemble once every four years to nominate candidates for president and vice president, ratify the party platform, elect officers, and adopt rules.
11. **Federal Election Commission (FEC)** – A commission created by the 1974 amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act to administer election reform laws. It consists of six commissioners appointed by president and confirmed by the Senate. Its duties include overseeing disclosure of campaign finance information and public funding of presidential elections, and enforcing contribution limits.
12. **Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act** – Largely banned party soft money, restored a long-standing prohibition on corporations and labor unions for using general treasury funds for electoral purposes, and narrowed the definition of issue advocacy.
13. **Soft money** – Money raised in unlimited amounts by political parties for party-building purposes. Now largely illegal except for limited contributions to state and local parties for voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts.
14. **Issue advocacy** – Promoting a particular position or an issue paid for by interest groups or individuals but not candidates. Much issue advocacy is often electioneering for or against a candidate, and until 2004 had not been subject to any regulation.
15. **Independent expenditures** – Money spent by individuals or groups not associated with candidates to elect or defeat candidates for office.
16. **Super PACs** – An independent expenditure only committee first allowed in 2010 after court decisions allowing unlimited contributions to such PACs.