# Unit Five

# Political Parties

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| **ITEM** | **DESCRIPTION OF LINKAGE** |
| **POLITICAL PARTIES** | A group which tries to win elections so they can control the government. |
| **ELECTIONS** | A process in which one person is selected for a governmental job. They should represent their constituents. |
| **INTEREST GROUPS** | -­Use propaganda to influence society  -­Use PACs to influence elections  -­Hire lobbying to influence Congress |
| **MASS MEDIA** | Gains people’s attention by selecting which stories to cover. |
| -­This entire unit covers **Linkage Institutions:** connect or link people with the government. | |

POLITICAL SCIENTISTS DESCRIBE POLITICAL PARTIES

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| **PORTION OF PARTY** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **GOVERNMENTAL PARTY** | The office holders who organize themselves and pursue policy objectives under a party label. |
| **ORGANIZATIONAL PARTY** | The workers and activists who make up the party’s formal organization structure. |
| **PARTY IN THE ELECTORATE** | The voters who consider themselves allied or associated with the party. |
| **DEFINITIONS:**  **-­Political Party:** An organized effort by office holders, candidates, activists, and voters to pursue their common interests by gaining and exercising power through the electoral process.  -­**Political Party:** is an organization of people which seeks to achieve goals common to its members through the acquisition and exercise of political power.  -­**Political Party:** A group who wins elections to gain power in the government.  -­**Political Party:** A group who wins elections so they can control the government. | |

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| **TERM** | **DEFINITION** | **EXAMPLE** |
| **PARTY REALIGNMENT** | A shifting of party coalition groupings in the electorate that remains in place for several elections. | -­Jefferson forms anti-­federalist to respond against federalists strong central government  -­Whig party dissolved over slavery and Republicans gained strength to win presidency of 1860.  -­Democrats gain former republicans during the New Deal legislation aimed to end depression of 1930’s). |
| **SECULAR REALIGNMENT** | The gradual rearrangement of party coalitions, based more on demographic shifts than on shocks to the political system. | Southern Democrats transformed into Republicans as the Democratic party shifted its platform toward liberal social causes. |
| -­**Critical election**: An election that signals a party realignment through voter polarization around new issues. (One or two of them generally precede a major realignment (or party realignment)  -­Secular realignment can take place because one generation is dying off and younger voters which replace them are different.  -­**Dealignment:** a general decline in party identification and loyalty in the electorate (similar sounding word, but different) | | |

POLITICAL PARTIES CHANGE OVER TIME

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| **1789-­1800** | **Federalists** won ratification of the Constitution and the presidency for the first three terms. | **Anti-­federalists** opposed strong national government and favored states’ rights and civil liberties. |
| **1800-­1824** | **Federalists** maintained beliefs in a loose interpretation of the Constitution to strengthen the nation. | **Democratic-­Republicans** (Jeffersonian) (AKA: Republicans) put less emphasis on a strong Union and more on states’ rights. |
| **1824-­1860** | **Democrats** (Jacksonians) encouraged greater participation in politics and gained Southern and Western following. | **Whigs** were a loose band of eastern capitalists, bankers, and merchants who wanted internal improvements and stronger national government. |
| **1860-­1896** | **Democrats** became the second-­place party, aligned with the South and the wage earner and sent only Grover Cleveland to the White House. | **Republicans** freed the slaves, reconstructed the Union, and aligned with industrial interests. |
| **1896-­1932** | **Democrats** join with Populists to represent the Southern and Midwestern farmers, workers, and Protestant reformers. | **Republicans** continue to dominate after a realignment based on economic factors. |
| **1932-­PRESENT** | **Democrats**, starting with the New Deal, have pushed for affirmative action, strong protection of civil liberties, and government intervention on the economy. | **Republicans** have taken on a laissez-­faire approach to economic regulation and a brand of conservatism that reflects limited government. |
| -­Some people notice that state’s rights and republicans are often in the right column so the right column must be conservative. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. Republicans in the 1860 would actually seem more liberal than the democrats of that time. By today’s standards liberals would care more about expanding the role or influence of government and conservatives would want to lessen the role government plays.  -­Some books point out the **Golden Age**: from 1860-­present day the Democrats and Republicans have dominated elections in the United States. | | |

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|  | **FUNCTION** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **I N**  **E L E C T I O N S** | **RECRUIT & LABEL CANDIDATES** | Parties search for candidates, nominate them, and help to define their viewpoints. |
| **BUILDING COALITIONS** | Parties try to build coalitions of like-­minded citizens. |
| **GATHER FUNDS** | Parties raise hundreds of millions of dollars for the campaigns. |
| **GET INFORMATION OUT** | Mailings, social media platforms, and other forms of communication can build support. |
| **I N**  **O F F I C E** | **POLICY FORMATION & PROMOTION**  **(AKA: GOVERNING OR RUNNING THE GOVERNMENT)** | Political parties play a major role in running the government. Legislatures at national and state level are organized along party lines. Most political appointments in the federal executive and judicial branches are made along party lines. |
| **OPPOSE OTHER PARTY**  **(AKA: WATCHDOG)** | No party is in control of all level of government Parties are the “loyal opposition,” trying to force compromises. |

TWO PARTY SYSTEM & MINOR PARTIES

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| **TYPE OF ELECTION** | **DESCRIPTION** | **SYSTEM** | **EFFECT ON PARTIES** |
| **PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION** | A voting system that apportions legislative seats according to the percentage of the vote won by a particular political party. | Multi-­party system | Minor parties are more successful in this system. This allows interests to be divided into more groupings. |
| **SINGLE-­MEMBER DISTRICTS**  **(AKA:WINNER-­TAKE-­ALL SYSTEM** | A system in which the party that receives at least one more vote than any other party wins the election. | Two-­party system | Minor parties do not generally do well. This encourages the grouping of interests into as few parties as possible. |
| -­The United States does not have proportional representation. It has a winner-­take-­all system so third parties are not as successful. Some countries do utilize a proportional representation system. They have a multi-­party system as opposed to the United States’ two party system.  -­**Minor Party**: (often called 3rd parties) a political party that plays a much smaller role than a major party in a country’s politics and elections. | | | |

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| **ITEM** | **DESCRIPTIONS & EXAMPLES** | |
| **THEY SOMETIMES TURN INTO MAJOR PARTIES** | -­Jacksonian Democrats was at first a minor party.  -­Lincoln's Republicans was at first a minor party.  -­Although no minor party has won the White House since 1860, they have sent members to Congress. | |
| **4 TYPES OF MINOR PARTIES** | **SINGLE ISSUE PARTIES** | Created to advance a particular policy or to solve one particular political concern. (Examples: **Free Soil Party** wanted to end slavery. The **American Party** wanted to tighten restrictions on immigration and citizenship) |
| **SPLINTER PARTIES (AKA: FACTIONAL OR BOLTER PARTIES)** | Break off from a larger existing party due to an ideology differing from that of party leaders. (Example: **Liberal Republicans** met in 1782 to oppose incumbent Ulysses S. Grant because he and the Radical Republicans were too harsh on allowing Southern States back into the Union) |
| **ECONOMIC PROTEST PARTIES** | They are created due to concern with economic conditions. (Example: In 1892, the **Populists** focused on issues that farmers faced) |
| **IDEOLOGICAL PARTIES**  **(AKA: DOCTRINAL PARTIES)** | Created to follow a prescribed ideology and have a comprehensive view of government and policy that differs greatly from that of the two major parties. (Example: The **Socialist Party** took on child labor, minimum wage, and foreign policy issues. The Socialist Party could also be viewed as an economic protest party) |
| **BIGGEST INFLUENCE** | Major parties sometimes adopt ideas from minor parties. | |
| **-­Minor Party**: (often called 3rd parties) a political party that plays a much smaller role than a major party in a country’s politics and elections.  -­Another historical minor party is the **Progressive Party** following Theodore Roosevelt didn’t like Republican leadership's (after Teddy had been president for 8 years) handling of trust busting (when government breaks up corporate trusts and monopolies) and environmental conservation. Teddy Roosevelt did better than Taft but it split the republican-­conservative vote allowing Woodrow Wilson (democrat) to be elected.  -­Modern Minor Party Presidential Candidates: Pat Buchanan ran with **Reform Party** in 2000. Ralph Nader, consumer advocate, ran with the  **Green Party** in 1996 and 2000.  -­To get a candidate's name printed on the ballot they must meet certain qualification in each State. Most states require a fee and a large amount of signatures.  -­Minor parties have a tougher time raising money and getting on ballots than major parties. Major parties are fearful they will split their votes and do not want them on ballots. | | |

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| **TYPE** | **EXAMPLE** | **PURPOSE** |
| **NATIONAL COMMITTEE** | **Democratic National Committee (DNC)** | The DNC and the RNC focus on aiding presidential campaigns and conducting general party-­building activities |
| **Republican National Committee (RNC)** |
| **PARTY COMMITTEES IN CONGRESS (AKA: HILL COMMITTEES)** | **National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC)** | The Hill Committees work primarily to maximise the number of seats held by their respective parties in Congress. |
| **National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC)** |
| **Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC)** |
| **Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC)** |

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| **PARTICIPANTS** | **WHEN THEY MEET** | **WHAT THEY DO** |
| Delegates from all 50 States (& U.S. territories) | Every 4 years | 1. Create **platform**: (a list of principals and plans that they wish to enact) 2. **Nominate Candidates**: (give official party endorsement for president and vice president) |

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| **ITEM** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **NATIONAL COMMITTEES** |  |
| **LEADERSHIP** | The **party chairperson** (or national chair) is the chief strategist and spokesperson. This person is not usually as famous as president or congressional leader but they run the party machinery (building up the membership, seek funding, recruiting quality candidates, conveying to voters the party philosophy). Each party elects its own chairperson by a vote of the committee. (So both the DNC and RNC has a chairperson) |
| **NATIONAL CONVENTIONS** |  |
| **STATE & LOCALITIES** | Every state has a statewide party organization. The state party chairperson makes public appearances on local television and works to recruit new member and register voters. Some have salaries and offices. County-­level chairperson from less populated counties operate effectively out of their home with nothing more than a basic web page and a supply of voter registration cards. State and local organizations can operate independently of the national committee. |
| **INFORMAL GROUPS** | **Interest groups** and **associations** that often provide money, labor, or other forms of assistance to the parties. **Think tanks** (institutional collections of policy-­oriented researchers and academics) also unofficially influence party positions. |

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| **BRANCH OR LAYER OF GOVERNMENT** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **CONGRESS** | Prior to the beginning of every session, the parties in both houses of Congress gather (or caucus) separately to select party leaders and to arrange for the appointment of members of each chamber’s committees. Leaders in congress often attempt to influence members to vote on party lines. |
| **PRESIDENCY** | Presidents need support in Congress to pass legislation. In exchange for congressional support the president often appoints many activists to office, recruiting candidates, raising money for the party treasury, and campaigning extensively for party nominees during elections seasons. |
| **JUDICIARY** | Judges are creatures of the political process. Judges are often seen as liberal or conservative. Democrats like to appoint liberal judges and Republicans like to appoint conservative judges. |
| **STATE GOVERNMENTS** | -­The political party influences the legislative, executive, and judicial branches at the state level as well.  -­Governors have more influence in their State than Presidents on political parties because they have more jobs to hand out.  -­State legislative leaders also have more power, thus party unity is usually higher in the state capitols. |

RECENT MAJOR PARTY SUPPORTERS

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| **CATEGORY** | **DEMOCRATS** | **REPUBLICANS** |
| **REGION** | Northeast States West Coast | Southern States Great Plain States Mountain States |
| **GENDER** | Women | Men |
| **ANCESTRY** | African Ancestry Hispanic Ancestry | European Ancestry |
| **RELIGION** | Catholic Jewish Nonreligious | Protestants Evangelicals |
| **WEALTH** | Poor | Wealthy |
| **URBAN/RURAL** | Urban | Rural Suburbs |
| These are decent trends for today’s electorate. They were supported with data and studies on the 2000 and 2004 elections. | | |

RECENT MAJOR PARTY PLATFORMS

POLITICAL PARTY

2012 PLATFORM

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| **HEALTH CARE FOR THE POOR** | Strengthen Medicaid and oppose efforts to block funding |
| **EQUAL RIGHTS FOR WOMEN** | Ensure full equality and support Equal Rights Amendment |
| **EQUALITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION** | All Americans deserve the same chance to pursue happiness regardless or sexual orientation |
| **IMMIGRATION** | Enact comprehensive reform that values our laws and a nation of immigrants |
| **CLIMATE CHANGE** | Affirms the science of climate change and need smart policies that lead to clean energy |
| **ABORTION** | Supports *Roe v. Wade* and a woman’s right to make decisions regarding her pregnancy |

DEMOCRATS

REPUBLICANS

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| **GOVERNMENT-­ FUNDED SUPPORT** | Stand in contrast to current administration's policies that expand entitlements, create new public programs, and provide expansive government bailouts |
| **DEATH PENALTY** | Courts should have the option of imposing the death penalty in capital murder cases |
| **MARRIAGE** | Marriage would be one man and one woman and this must be upheld as the national standard |
| **IMMIGRATION** | Oppose any form of amnesty of those that intentionally violated the law |
| **GUN CONTROL** | Pass laws consistent with Supreme Court decisions which have upheld the fundamental right to keep and bear arms for  self-­defense |
| **ABORTION** | We oppose using public revenues to promote or perform abortions of fund organizations which perform or advocate it |

**Platform**: a list of principles and plans a political party hopes to enact. It is the best way to determine a party’s primary ideology. Political Parties write a platform at every **National Convention** (when they also officially nominate presidential and vice presidential candidate).

POLITICAL PARTIES MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES & THE MEDIA

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| **PARTY** | **MASCOT** | **TYPES OF PEOPLE** | **NEWS OUTLETS LEANING THEIR WAY** |
| **DEMOCRATS** | Donkey | * African Americans * Pacifists * Environmentalists * Feminists * Latinos * Members of organized labor | * Washington Post * The Nation * New Republic * CNN * Air America Radio |
|  |  | * Neo-­conservatives * Business interests * Wall Street and financial interests * Supply-­side conservatives * Religious conservatives * Southern conservatives * Mountain states’ conservatives (more libertarian) | * Washington Times |
| **REPUBLICANS**  **(AKA: GRAND OLD** | Elephant | * National Review * The Wall Street Journal |
| **PARTY, GOP)** |  | * Fox News |
|  |  | * Rush Limbaugh |
| Republicans are the elephants. Democrats are the donkeys. Both mascots started out as satire to make fun of the political parties in the 1800’s. Both parties embraced their mascots today. | | | |

PARTY IDENTIFICATION & DEALIGNMENT

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| **ITEM** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **PARTY IDENTIFICATION** | A citizen’s personal affinity for a political party, usually expressed by a tendency to vote for the candidates for that party. |
| **DEALIGNMENT** | A general decline in party identification and loyalty in the electorate. |
| -­Party membership is optional. People can change it whenever they want.  -­Some people like to call themselves independent even though they always vote for the same political party to win.  -­Lately about 40% of the American public have been identifying themselves as independent. The two major parties go up and down but both of them can usually claim near 30%.  -­Party Identification is still the most accurate indicator of how an individual will vote. | |