CHAPTER 13
The Presidency

SECTION 1 - The President’s Job Description
SECTION 2 - Presidential Succession & the Vice Presidency
SECTION 3 - Presidential Selection: The Framers’ Plan
SECTION 4 - Presidential Nominations
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The President’s Roles

Chief of State
– The President is the ceremonial head of the govt of the U.S. - the symbol of all the people of the nation

Chief Executive
– The Constitution vests the President with the executive power of the United States, making him or her the nation’s chief executive

Chief Administrator
– The President is the chief administrator, or director, of the United States govt

Chief Diplomat
– As the nation’s chief diplomat, the President is the main architect of American foreign policy and chief spokesperson to the rest of the world
4 More Roles of the President

Commander in Chief
– The Constitution makes the President the *commander in chief*, giving him/her complete control of the nation’s armed forces

Chief Legislator
– The President is the *chief legislator*, the main architect of the nation’s public policies

Chief of Party
– The President acts as the *chief of party*, the acknowledged leader of the political party that controls the executive branch

Chief Citizen
– The President is expected to be “the representative of all the people”
Qualifications for President

Article II, Section 1, Clause 5, of the Constitution says that the President must:

• **(1) Be “a natural born citizen.”** - A person must be born a citizen of the U.S. to be able to become President

• **(2) Be at least 35 years of age** - John F. Kennedy at age 43 was the youngest person to be elected President

• **(3) Have lived in the United States for at least 14 years**
What Traits to YOU Want to See?
The President’s Term

• Until 1951, the Constitution placed no limit on the # of terms a President might serve

• G. Washington’s precedent, Presidents limited the number of terms served to two.

• Precedent was broken by F.D.R. in 1940 when he ran for/won a 3rd term.

• The 22nd Amendment placed limits on presidential terms.
Anti-Third Term Principle
Pay and Benefits

Congress determines the President’s salary, and it cannot be changed during a presidential term

- G.W.’s salary was set at $25,000 a year. The President now makes $400,000 a year

- Congress has also approved an expense allowance for the President, which is currently $50,000 a year

- The President gets to live in the 132-room mansion we call the White House

- The President also has a large suite of offices, a staff, the use of *Air Force One*, and many other fringe benefits
SECTION 2

Presidential Succession and the Vice Presidency

• How does the Constitution provide for presidential succession?

• What are the constitutional provisions for presidential disability?

• What is the role of the Vice President?
The Constitution and Succession

- **Presidential succession** is the plan by which a presidential vacancy is filled

- The 25th Amendment, ratified in 1967, made it clear that the Vice President will become President if the President is removed from office (previously vague)

- The **Presidential Succession Act of 1947** set the order of succession (following Vice President)
Presidential Disability

- Sections 3 and 4 of the 25th Amendment provide procedures to follow when the President is disabled
- The Vice President is to become acting President if
  
  (1) the President informs Congress, in writing, “that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office,” or

  (2) the Vice President and a majority of the members of the Cabinet inform Congress, in writing, that the President is incapacitated
The Vice Presidency

• The Constitution only gives the Vice President 2 duties besides becoming President if Pres. is removed from office:
  1) to preside over the Senate, and
  2) to help decide the question of presidential disability

• If the office of Vice President becomes vacant, the President nominates a new V.P. subject to the approval of Congress

• Today, the V.P. often performs diplomatic & political chores for the President
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Successor</th>
<th>Reason for Succession</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Tyler</td>
<td>Death (pneumonia) of William Henry Harrison, April 4, 1841</td>
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<tr>
<td>Millard Fillmore</td>
<td>Death (gastroenteritis) of Zachary Taylor, July 9, 1850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Johnson</td>
<td>Death (assassination) of Abraham Lincoln, April 15, 1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester A. Arthur</td>
<td>Death (assassination) of James A. Garfield, September 19, 1881</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theodore Roosevelt</td>
<td>Death (assassination) of William McKinley, September 14, 1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calvin Coolidge</td>
<td>Death (undisclosed illness) of Warren G. Harding, August 2, 1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry S Truman</td>
<td>Death (cerebral hemorrhage) of Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 12, 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyndon B. Johnson</td>
<td>Death (assassination) of John F. Kennedy, November 22, 1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerald R. Ford</td>
<td>Resignation of Richard M. Nixon, August 9, 1974</td>
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Section 3 – The Framers’ Original Plan for Presidential Selection

• What were the Framers’ original provisions for choosing the President?

• How did the rise of political parties change the original provisions set out in the Constitution?

Electoral College Map of 1789 Election
Original Provisions

- According to the Constitution, the President and Vice President are chosen by a special body of **presidential electors**

- Originally, these electors each cast 2 **electoral votes**, each for a different candidate. The candidate with the most votes would become President, and the candidate with the 2\textsuperscript{nd} highest total would become Vice President

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Framers’ Plan for the Electoral College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> Each State would have as many presidential electors as it has senators and representatives in Congress.</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong> These electors would be chosen in each State in a manner the State legislature directed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> The electors, meeting in their own States, would each cast two votes—each for a different person for President.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> These electoral votes from the States would be opened and counted before a joint session of Congress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5</strong> The person receiving the largest number of electoral votes, provided that total was a majority of all the electors, would become President.</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong> The person with the second highest number of electoral votes would become Vice President.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7</strong> If a tie occurred, or if no one received the votes of a majority of the electors, the President would be chosen by the House of Representatives, voting by States.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8</strong> If a tie occurred for the second spot, the Vice President would be chosen by the Senate.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The Rise of Parties

- The **electoral college** is the group of people (electors) chosen from each State and the District of Columbia that formally selects the President and Vice President.
- With the rise of political parties in 1796, flaws began to be seen in the system.
The 12th Amendment

- The 12th Amendment was added to the Constitution in 1804 following the election of 1800
- The major change in the electoral college made by the amendment was that each elector would distinctly cast one electoral vote for President and one for Vice President
SECTION 4

Presidential Nominations

• What role do conventions play in the presidential nominating process?
• How important are presidential primaries?
• What differences exist between the caucus-convention process and the primary process?
• What events take place during a national convention?
• What characteristics determine who is nominated as a presidential candidate?
The Role of Conventions

National Convention

• The convention system is used to nominate candidates for the November general election

• Each party has a national committee that arranges the time/place for their convention

Apportionment & Selection of Delegates

• Parties apportion the # of delegates each State sends to the convention based on electoral votes & other factors--mostly proportional to population

• Which delegates go to the convention (and who they support) are selected by primaries/caucuses
Presidential Primaries

- Some states have a **presidential primary**, which is the party members’ state-wide election to:
  1. choose some/all of a State’s party organization’s delegates to their party’s natl convention, and/or
  2. express a preference among various contenders for their party’s presidential nomination

- Some states use a **proportional representation** rule to select delegates (a state’s delegates are chosen based on percentage of the support for a candidate), others use **winner-take-all** system

- Typically the winners of the primary/caucuses win the majority of delegate support and will therefore win the delegate vote at the convention

- Primary/caucus season is in the spring before the general election (that November)
The Caucus Process

• In states that do not hold primaries, party members choose delegates to the national convention through caucuses (Iowa, NV)

• The party’s voters meet in local venues where they discuss candidate preferences, vote, then lobby to get 2\textsuperscript{nd} choice votes

• The caucus participants who support candidates who fail to garner a certain percentage of support after the 1\textsuperscript{st} vote, they have to support a 2\textsuperscript{nd} chance candidate

• Those delegates favor certain candidates and will cast their votes at the convention
The National Convention

A party’s **national convention** is the meeting at which delegates vote to pick their presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Conventions accomplish three main goals:

(1) to officially name party’s presidential & vice-presidential candidates,

(2) to bring the various factions and leading personalities in the party together in one place for a common purpose,

(3) to adopt the party’s **platform**—its formal statement of basic principles, stands on major policy matters, and objectives for the campaign and beyond.
Who Is Nominated?

• If an incumbent President wants to seek reelection, his/her nomination is almost guaranteed

• Political experience factors into the nomination process. State governors, (the executive officers on the State level), have historically been favored for nomination - U.S. senators also have fared well

• Many candidates come from key larger states. Candidates from larger states, such as California, New York, and Ohio, have usually been seen as more “elect-able” than candidates from smaller states
S E C T I O N  5

The Election

• What is the function of the electoral college today?

• What are the flaws in the electoral college?

• What are the advantages and disadvantages of proposed reforms in the electoral college?
The Electoral College Today

**Voters do not vote directly for the President. Instead, they vote for electors in the electoral college.**

- All States, except 2 (Maine & Nebraska), select electors based on the winner of the popular vote in that State.

- Electors then meet in the State capitals on a Monday in mid-December and cast their votes for President and Vice President.
President is Officially Elected

• On January 6, the electoral votes cast are counted by the president of the Senate, and the President and Vice President are formally elected.

• If no candidate wins a majority of electoral votes (270), the election is thrown into the House of Representatives.
Flaws in the Electoral College

There are three major defects in the electoral college:

(1) It is possible to win the popular vote in the presidential election, but lose the electoral college vote. This has happened four times in U.S. history (1824, 1876, 1888, and 2000).

(2) Nothing in the Constitution, nor in any federal statute, requires the electors to vote for the candidate favored by the popular vote in their State.

(3) If no candidate gains a majority in the electoral college, the election is thrown into the House, a situation that has happened twice (1800 and 1824). In this process, each State is given one vote, meaning that States with smaller populations wield the same power as those with larger populations.
A commonly heard reform suggests that the electoral college be done away with altogether in favor of direct popular election. At the polls, voters would vote directly for the President and Vice President instead of electors.

The national bonus plan would automatically offer the winner of the popular vote 102 electoral votes in addition to the other electoral votes he or she might gain.
2 More Plans for Reform

• In the **district plan**, electors would be chosen the same way members of Congress are selected: each congressional district would select one elector (just as they select representatives), and two electors would be selected based on the overall popular vote in a State (just as senators are selected)

• The **proportional plan** suggests that each candidate would receive the same share of a State’s electoral vote as he or she received in the State’s popular vote
Electoral College Supporters

• There are 2 major strengths of the electoral college that its supporters espouse:

• It is a known process. Each of the proposed, but untried, reforms may very well have defects that could not be known until they appeared in practice

• In most election years, the electoral college defines the winner of the presidential election quickly and certainly