Chapter 8 – Political Parties

1. What is a political party?
2. Explain the three heads of a political party as a “three-headed political giant.”
3. What is a linkage institution?
4. What are the five tasks political parties must perform if they are to serve as effective linkage institutions?
5. Draw a graph or diagram depicting Anthony Downs' rational choice model of political parties.
6. What has been the trend of party identification in recent years?
7. What is meant by “ticket-splitting”?
8. Draw an organizational chart of an American political party and then mark where most of the power actually exists.
9. What is meant by a “party machine”?
10. What is the difference between open primaries and closed primaries?
11. List all of the American Presidents since 1968. What years did each serve? Which political party controlled Congress during their presidencies?
12. What is meant by party realignment and party dealignment?
13. What are the three basic varieties of “third parties”?
14. What is the most important consequence of two-party governance in the United States?
15. List the four conditions that advocates of the responsible party model believe the parties should meet.
16. Who are the “Blue Dog Democrats”?
17. How does the American party system affect the scope of government?

Chapter 9 – Nominations & Campaigns

1. To win the nomination game, candidates need what?
2. Paraphrase former Speaker of the House Tom Foley's comments on running for president.
3. What is a national party convention?
4. What reforms did the McGovern-Fraser Commission bring the Democratic Party? What are superdelegates? What is the “invisible primary”?
5. What does it mean that the primary & caucus system is “frontloaded”?
6. List five criticisms of the primary and caucus system.
7. What is a “party platform”?
8. How has the internet changed the campaign game?
9. List ten things candidates must do to effectively organize their campaigns.
10. What are the main parts of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974?
11. What are the three main provisions of the McCain-Feingold Act (2002)?
12. Make an argument that political action committees are essential to a successful campaign.
13. What was the Citizens United case all about? How did it change the political campaign process? What role have 527 groups, 501(c) groups, and Super PACs played in this?
14. Explain the doctrine of sufficiency.
15. What is political efficacy?
16. What factors impact whether or not someone will actually vote? Explain.
17. Look at the chart on page 297. Which demographic group had the highest voter turnout in the 2012 election? Which group had the lowest?
18. What is the “mandate theory of elections”?
19. How does the competition in key battleground states impact the scope of government? Give specific examples.