

# Perspectives on American Government

<b>Guiding Principle of Constitutional Interpretation</b>		
The plain meaning of the text of a legal document and not the intent of drafters, adopters, or ratifiers	The dynamic meaning of the text that evolves, changes over time, and adapts to new circumstances without being formally amended	The original public meaning of the Constitution as understood at the time of the Founding or, in the case of an amendment, its ratification
<b>Preferred Size of Federal Government</b>		
Smaller government with fewer services	Larger government with more services	
<b>Scope of Federal Government</b>		
Government should do more to solve problems and help meet the needs of people	Government is doing too many things better left to businesses and individuals	
<b>Federal Power under the Constitution</b>		
The federal government may do only what the Constitution explicitly authorizes	The federal government may do anything that the Constitution does not explicitly proscribe	
<b>Interpretive Power of the Federal Branches</b>		
Only the federal courts have the power to interpret the law	Congress and the President have the power to interpret the law	
<b>Nature of Rights</b>		
Rights that are not mentioned in the Constitution must be deeply rooted in this Nation's history and tradition and implicit in the concept of ordered liberty.	The Constitution must draw its meaning from the evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society.	
<b>Protection of Rights</b>		
The federal government is the appropriate guardian of rights	The states are the appropriate guardian of rights	
<b>Voting and Elections</b>		
Voting is a right, and elections should be organized to include the greatest number of Americans	Voting is a privilege, and elections should be organized to include the most qualified Americans	