

# The Constitution

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PLSC 1

# Road map

- Nearpod studies
- Where did the Constitution come from?
- What does it say?



# PennState

We are measuring what actions college students might take in response to civic challenges. Below, you will be asked to consider a series of four short scenarios and then simply let us know how you would respond if you chose that particular response. We anticipate that completing this survey will take approximately 10 minutes of your time. Thank you for your participation.



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# Philosophical Foundations

- Rights - Are they from God or the King?
  - Magna Carta (1215) - The King
  - English Bill of Rights (1689) - Parliament
  - John Locke (1689) - God

# Practical Foundations

One way to govern: Monarchy

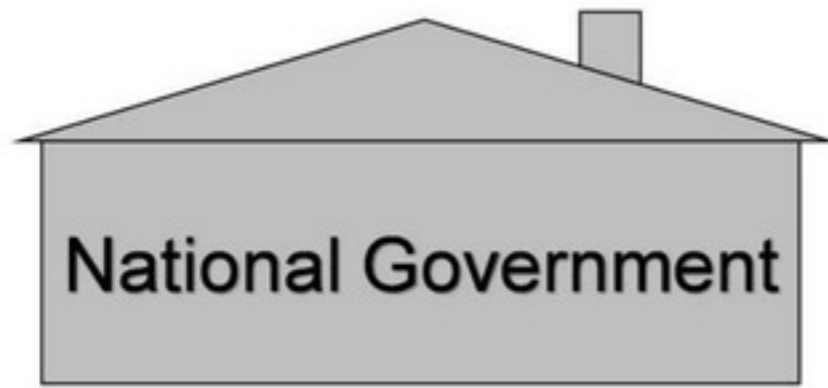
- Strong executive
- Extension of effective British bureaucracy to colonies
- No consent to taxation, no representation



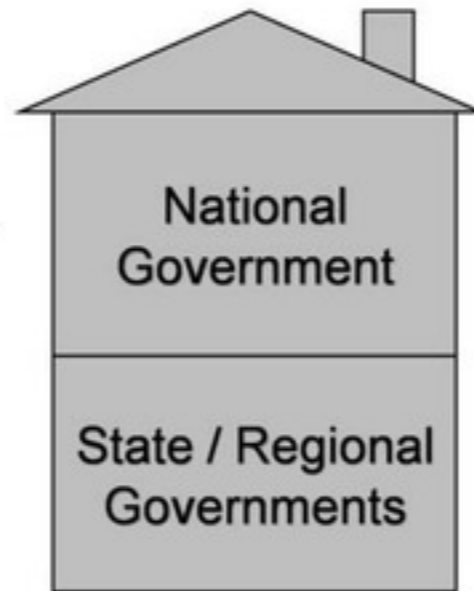
# Open Ended Question

**What type of government would you put into place after overthrowing a strong central executive?**

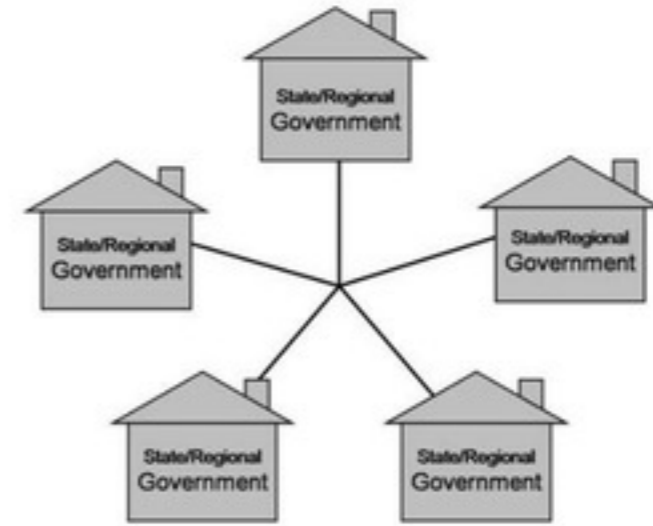
# Systems of Government



**unitary**



**federal**



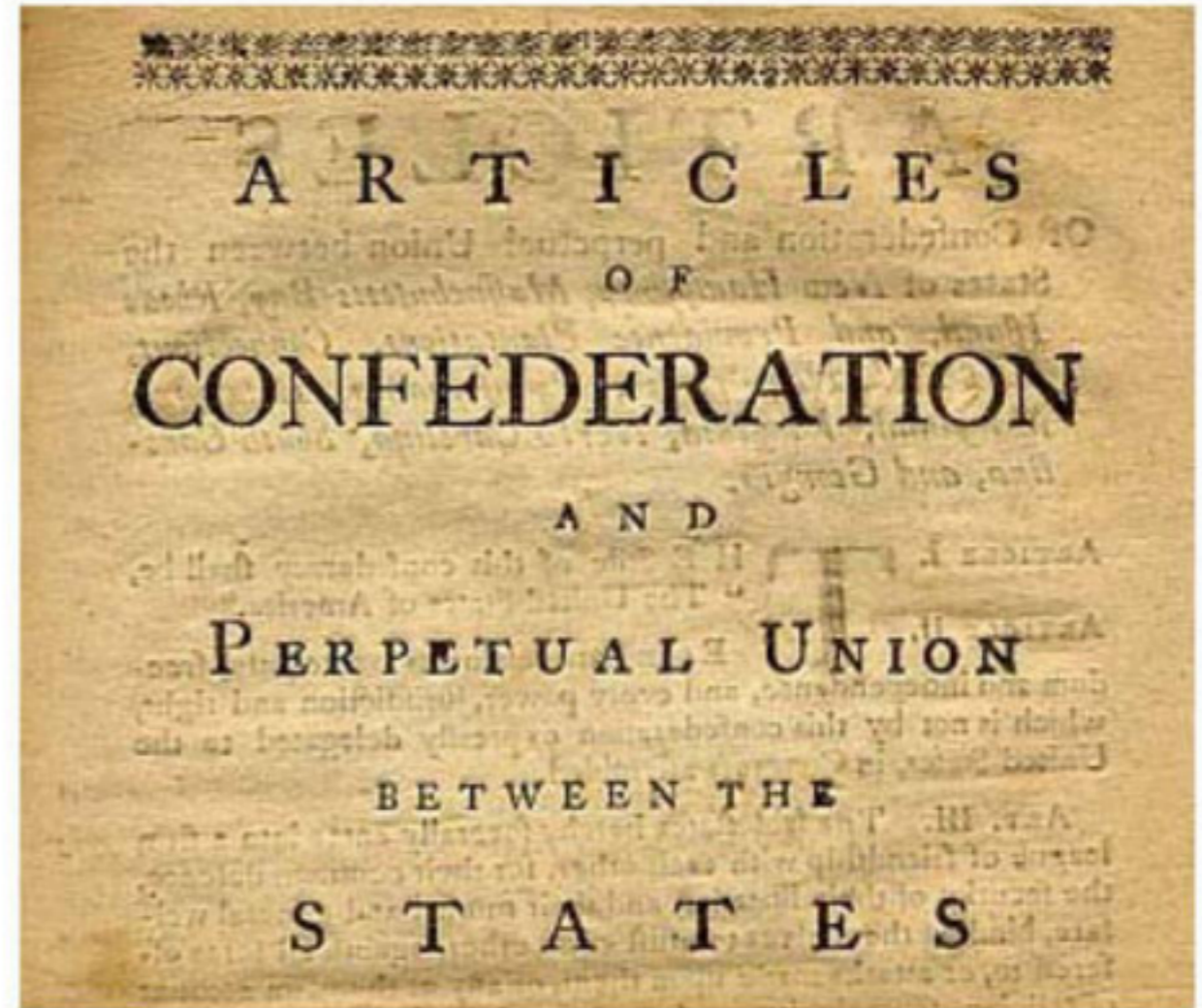
**confederation**

h/t



# The Articles of Confederation (1781-89)

- Codified a strong reaction to executive power
- Weak Congress (e.g., no tax power)
- Three year term limit (anti-elitism)
- Little ability to defend nation
- Unanimity required for amendment



# Constitutional Convention

- Revision turned into replacement
- Controversies:
  - Small vs. big states
  - Slavery
  - Federal Supremacy vs. State Sovereignty
  - Individual liberty vs. social stability

# Compromises

## Small vs. big states

- The Great Compromise: Bicameral Congress
- Senate: appointed by states, 6 year term
- House: directly voted, 2 year term

How is this a compromise between big and little states?

# Compromises

## Slavery

- 682,000 enslaved in 1790 (25% of population)
- 3/5 Compromise
- 20 year ban on ending slave importation
- Fugitive slave clause



Should delegates who opposed slavery be willing to compromise? Why or why not?

**Collaborate!**

**Slavery**

# Compromises

## Federal-State Power

- Federal enumerated powers (war, tax, currency, foreign and interstate commerce, raise army and navy, post office, treaties, immigration)
- Powers reserved for states (everything else)
- Supremacy Clause
- Necessary and Proper Clause

# Open Ended Question

**What is the point of the Supremacy and Necessary and Property clauses?**



# Compromises

## Individual Liberty

- Bill of Rights (1791)
- Response to Antifederalist concerns
- Amendments have allowed constitution some flexibility

# What's In the Constitution?

## Articles I - IV

- Congress, President, Courts, States
- Separation of Powers
- Checks and Balances
- State sovereignty

Really about sharing power, cooperation, not competition

# What's In the Constitution?

## Articles V - VII

- V - Amendment
  - $\frac{2}{3}$  of House and Senate plus  $\frac{3}{4}$  of states; or
  - $\frac{2}{3}$  of states call for convention

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- VI - Constitution is supreme law of the land
- VII - Ratification
  - Nine state conventions needed (1788)

# New Amendments



What new amendments should be added to the Constitution? Why?

**Collaborate!**

## New Amendments

# Questions?



**Figure:** Q&A by [Libby Levi](#), CC BY-SA 2.0