

5.6 Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making

Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest group influence on elections and policy making.

Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.

1. What did James Madison say about factions in Federalist 10?
 - a. Such activity was natural
 - b. Such activity was reserved for elites
 - c. Such activity should be avoided at all costs
 - d. Such activity would imperil our democracy

2. Which of the following best describes how most Americans perceive interest group activity?
 - a. 25% believe interest groups have too much power and authority
 - b. 50% believe interest groups have too much power and authority
 - c. 75% believe interest groups have too much power and authority
 - d. 100% believe interest groups have too much power and authority

3. Who is most likely to join an interest group?
 - a. The poor
 - b. Working class
 - c. Young activists
 - d. Those with better than average incomes

4. Interest groups have proliferated in the United States for all of the following reasons EXCEPT
 - a. Social diversity
 - b. Great trust in government
 - c. Federalism
 - d. Weak political parties

5. The act of influencing government is called
 - a. Lobbying
 - b. Peddling
 - c. Needling
 - d. Huckstering

6. Which of the following statements about interest groups is most true?
 - a. Many try to remain bipartisan
 - b. Many align with one elected official
 - c. Avoid writing legislation
 - d. Find their greatest success demonstrating and making noise

7. Interest groups can affect litigation through

- a. The nomination of judicial candidates
- b. Fund raising for federal judges
- c. Stacking juries
- d. Writing amicus briefs

8. Using the following passage to answer the question that follows:

The coin of lobbying, as of politics, is trust . . . truth telling and square dealing are of paramount importance in this profession. If [one] lies, misrepresents, or even lets a misapprehension stand uncorrected—or if someone cuts his corners too slyly—he is . . . dead and gone, never to be resurrected or even mourned.

Which of the following best exemplifies the main idea of this passage?

- a. Tom, representing a pharmaceutical company, told Senator Conin that the new drug would be expensive.
- b. Tom, representing an oil company, hid information about pollutants from Senator Conin.
- c. Tom, representing an oil company, hid information about pollutants from Senator Conin
- d. Tom, representing realtors, spread rumors about impending mortgage interest rates

9. All of the following are players within an “iron triangle” EXCEPT

- a. Congressional committee
- b. Executive agency
- c. Interest Group
- d. Members of the media

10. In the past “iron triangles” made policy-making difficult and immovable. Today political scientists refer to a more fluid, flexible policy-making coalition called

- a. Issue networks
- b. Ad hoc coalitions
- c. Broad based coalitions
- d. Issue boxes

11. Despite James Madison’s fear that factions would be harmful to American democracy, interest groups have proliferated in our political arena. American society has become a breeding ground for interest groups for all of the following reasons EXCEPT

- a. Social diversity
- b. Federalism
- c. Weak political parties
- d. Weak candidates

12. Who is most likely to join an interest group?

- a. High school dropouts
- b. Unemployed suburbanites
- c. Better than average incomes
- d. College students

13. Invariably interest groups help produce inequities when it comes to having access to decision makers. What percentage of Americans believes interest groups have too much power?

- a. 100%
- b. 75%
- c. 50%
- d. 25%

14. All of the following are commonly used names for interest groups EXCEPT

- a. Factions
- b. Special interests
- c. K Street
- d. Hobby Lobby

15. In American politics a free rider is someone who

- a. Votes against all incumbents in both primary and general elections
- b. Receives a benefit from an interest groups without participating
- c. Gives money to local interests but not national interests
- d. Wins an election without facing any opposition

16. Tom resigned from the Senate after serving four consecutive terms. He was quickly hired by a large special interest group in Washington DC where he utilized his contacts to influence public policy. In political science terms Tom

- a. Violated the non-delegation doctrine
- b. Took advantage of an amicus curiae brief
- c. Went through the "revolving door"
- d. Is now employed as an earmark

17. Most political scientists recognize that the single greatest commodity held by interest groups is

- a. The ability to mobilize large numbers of voters
- b. The ability to raise large sums of money
- c. The ability to provide invaluable information
- d. The ability to nominate winning candidates

18. All of the following are valuable techniques used by interest groups EXCEPT

- a. Write policy proposals
- b. Testify before Congressional committees
- c. Help candidates campaign
- d. Negotiate with foreign governments

19. If political parties primarily want to win elections what do interest groups primarily want to do?

- a. Raise money for campaigns
- b. Influence public policy
- c. Choose candidates
- d. Also win elections

20. Political Action Committees (PACs) were created to circumvent restrictive campaign laws. PACs primary responsibility is to

- a. Collect money and give it candidates
- b. Disseminate negative campaign ads
- c. Recruit volunteers to work door-to-door for the candidates
- d. Vet potential vice-presidential candidates

21. Which of the following best describe an iron triangle?

- a. A bureaucratic agency, an interest group, and a congressional committee
- b. The president, an interest group, and a congressional committee
- c. Senate majority leader, an interest group, and the president
- d. A Cabinet secretary, a state governor, and a congressional committee