

## Handout 2 - Outline of the Constitution

**Preamble:** States the six purposes for writing the Constitution: to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty).

### **Article 1:** The Legislative Branch (Congress)

1. All legislative (law-making) powers are granted to Congress, which is made up of two houses: a Senate and a House of Representatives
2. The House: rules regarding the House of Representatives including selection, age qualifications, and special powers granted only to the House
3. The Senate: rules regarding the selection and powers of the Senate
4. Elections and meetings
5. Membership, rules, journals, adjournment
6. Compensation
7. Revenue (money) bills, legislative process (how a bill becomes a law), presidential veto
8. Delegated (specifically stated) powers of Congress
9. Limits on congressional power
10. Limits on states under the Constitution

### **Article 2:** The Executive Branch (the president)

1. Rules regarding term of office, age qualifications, and the election process.
2. Powers of the president, including civilian power over military, the Cabinet, pardon powers and appointments, and that all laws be faithfully executed
3. State of Union address; convening Congress, executive power, and others
4. Disqualification and grounds for impeachment

### **Article 3:** The Judicial Branch (the Courts)

1. Judicial powers given to one Supreme Court and to inferior courts established by Congress

2. Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, original jurisdiction, jury trials
3. Definition of treason

**Article 4:** The States

1. Full faith and credit given to each state
2. Rights of citizens, extradition
3. Rules for new states and governing territories
4. Every state is guaranteed a republican form of government and protection from invasion

**Article 5:** The procedure for amending the Constitution

**Article 6:** The United States accepts responsibility for debts contracted before this Constitution; this Constitution is the “supreme law of the land” over state constitutions.

**Article 7:** Ratification, this document must be ratified by nine states to become effective

**Amendments:**

“The first 10 amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, were proposed on September 25, 1789, and ratified on December 15, 1791. Originally, the amendments restricted only the Federal government. But the 14th Amendment declares that no state can deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without ‘due process of law.’ The Supreme Court has interpreted those words to mean that most of the Bill of Rights applies to limit the states and their local governments as well.” (IIP Digital, 2007)

*Bill of Rights, ratified in 1789*

1. Freedom of religion, speech, and the press; rights of assembly and to petition.
2. Right to keep and bear arms
3. House or quartering of soldiers
4. Search, seizure and arrest warrants
5. Rights in criminal cases, trial and punishment
6. Right to a speedy trial, confrontation of witnesses
7. Trial by jury in civil cases
8. No excessive bails or fines, nor cruel or unusual punishment inflicted

9. Rights retained by the people
  10. Rights retained by the states and by the people
- Additional amendments; dates of ratification stated*
11. Judicial limits, lawsuits against states (1795)
  12. Election of the president and vice-president, the Electoral College (1804)
  13. Abolition of slavery (slavery ended) (1865)
  14. Civil rights for all the people, including freed slaves (1868)
  15. Suffrage for African Americans (1870)\*
  16. Income taxes authorized (1913)
  17. Senators elected by popular vote or direct elections (1913)
  18. Prohibition of liquor (1919)
  19. Suffrage for women (1920)\*
  20. Terms of president and Congress established (1933)
  21. Repeal of prohibition of liquor (1933)
  22. Limitation of presidents to two terms (1951)
  23. Suffrage the people of the District of Columbia (1961)\*
  24. Poll taxes abolished (1964) Note: A poll tax was a tax on the right to vote.
  25. Presidential disability and succession (1967)
  26. Suffrage for 18-year olds (1971)\*
  27. Limits on Congressional pay raises (1992)

\* The word suffrage means “given the right to vote.”

*Citation: IIP Digital. (2007, July 4). Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, annotated. Retrieved from <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/publication/2008/04/20080416204259eai fas0.7985803.html#ixzz46NhGguMG>*