

Features of the Constitution

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

Week One Discussion: Features of the Constitution

One fundamental feature of the U.S. Constitution designed to protect individuals from government abuse of power is the system of checks and balances. This mechanism ensures that the powers of government are divided among three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial. Each branch has specific powers and responsibilities, and crucially, the ability to check the powers of the other branches. This system was established to prevent any branch from becoming too powerful and maintain a balance protecting individual liberties.

The relevance of checks and balances in contemporary American society cannot be overstated. Recent events underscore its importance. For instance, during the impeachment trials of recent presidents, the legislative branch exercised its power to check the executive branch, demonstrating the ongoing application of this principle. Additionally, the judicial branch frequently rules on the constitutionality of executive actions and legislative statutes, exemplifying the dynamic nature of checks and balances in maintaining the rule of law.

A specific example illustrating the importance of checks and balances today is the Supreme Court's role in adjudicating disputes over executive orders. In 2020, the Supreme Court ruled against the Trump administration's attempt to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, asserting that the administration had not followed proper procedures. This decision highlights the judiciary's critical role in checking executive actions that may overstep legal boundaries and protecting individuals from potential governmental overreach.

The principle of checks and balances is rooted in the framers' intention to create a government that is powerful enough to function effectively but not so powerful as to threaten individual freedoms. The ongoing application of this system illustrates its enduring significance

in safeguarding democratic principles and ensuring that power remains appropriately distributed among the branches of government.

Peer Response

Respond to at least one of your colleagues' postings in one or more of the following ways:

- Ask a probing question.
- Share an insight from having read your colleague's posting.
- Offer and support an opinion.
- Validate an idea with your own experience.
- Make a suggestion.
- Expand on your colleague's posting.

Response 01

Hey Ben, great post! You effectively highlighted the importance of checks and balances in preventing governmental overreach. Your use of recent examples, such as the Supreme Court's ruling on DACA, illustrates the system's ongoing relevance. Overall, excellent work in connecting historical principles to modern issues.

Response 02

Responding to peers is vital to the POLI 1001 Week One Discussion posts. We need to provide at least two peer responses. I have provided one example post. You can write your peer responses keeping the above points in mind.