



Understanding American Government

By Susan Welch, John Gruhl, Susan M. Rigdon, Sue Thomas

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UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN GOVERNMENT is highly respected and trusted for its attention to research and issues of diversity, as well as for its award-winning team of authors. While covering the foundations and features of American government, this text also moves beyond the nuts and bolts to explain why and how important features of government have evolved, their impact on government and individuals, and why these features are controversial (if they are) and worth learning. More than just narrating facts and current issues, UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN GOVERNMENT leaves students with an understanding of the "why", so their knowledge can be applied long after the course is completed. UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN GOVERNMENT is a three-time winner of the American Government Textbook Award for the Best Treatment of Women in Politics, by the Women's Caucus for Political Science.

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Editorial Review

Review

"I have been using the Welch text on and off over the years and it has always had the right nuts and bolts without going into odd directions. The emphasis on diversity is excellent. I have been a reviewer more than once of the Women's Caucus Award, and I've read texts that were good examples of who should not win the award. The attention to diversity is critical in our time." - Terri Fine, University of Central Florida

"I especially like the background discussion on the formation of the Constitution. The authors do a good job of examining the "why" here and the chapter is clear, concise, and fits together nicely." - Richard Hungate, Joliet Junior College

"I appreciate the use of student-friendly language, not obtuse verbiage, in conveying the 'why' of politics and its relevance to our daily lives." - Griffin Hathaway, Illinois Central College

About the Author

Susan Welch received her AB and PhD degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Professor of Political Science at The Pennsylvania State University. Her teaching and research areas include legislatures, urban politics, and women and minorities in politics. She publishes widely on issues of race, gender, and urban politics.

John Gruhl, Professor of Political Science, received his AB from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, and his PhD from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Since joining the University of Nebraska faculty in 1976, he has taught and done research in the areas of judicial process, criminal justice, and civil rights and liberties. He holds campus- and university-wide distinguished teaching awards for excellence in undergraduate teaching and became a charter member of the university's Academy of Distinguished Teachers.

Susan M. Rigdon received AB and PhD degrees in political science from the University of Illinois in 1966 and 1971, respectively. While focusing her teaching on comparative politics and international relations, she has also taught American government courses at several universities in the United States and China. Her research interests include culture and politics, security policy, and poverty and development. She is a Research Associate in Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Sue Thomas is Senior Research Scientist at the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) and Director of PIRE-Santa Cruz. Prior to joining PIRE, she served as Associate Professor of Government and Director of Women's Studies at Georgetown University. She received her A.B. and M.Ed. from UCLA, and her Ph.D. from University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Her research specialty is women and politics, and among her publications are *How Women Legislate* and *Women and Elective Office: Past, Present, and Future*.

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