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Chapter 2: Elements and History of the U.S. Political Structure

1. The notion of social order becoming a value in itself can be attributed to:
    a. Garret Hardin
    *b. Thomas Hobbes
    c. Richard Freeman
    d. James Madison

    RATIONALE: The English philosopher and political theorist Thomas Hobbes prioritized social order over the freedom of individuals to choose their own values. Without it, he said that life would be a war of all against all.

2. Authoritative allocation of values implies that decisions of the government are:
    a. Right
    b. Rational
    c. Moral
    *d. Enforced

    RATIONALE: Nation-states enact laws that are opposed by some of their population and/or seen as immoral, wrong, and/or irrational from a historical perspective. Authoritative allocation of values only means that the "police powers" of the state will be used to enforce the laws of the land.

3. The Founding Fathers considered "natural rights" to be given by:
    a. The government
    b. The king
    c. The Constitution
    *d. Nature or God

    RATIONALE: According to the U.S. Declaration of Independence, natural rights such as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, are granted by nature or God and "unalienable." In contrast, legal rights given by the government can be taken away by the same.

4. The legal principle of _____ forms the basis of the composition of common law.
    *a. *Stare decisis*
    b. *Habeas corpus*
    c. *Mandamus*
    d. None of the above

    RATIONALE: Common law is composed of precedents established over time by the judiciary ruling on individual cases, adding a degree of predictability as to how the courts would rule given similar cases. This legal principle is called *stare decisis.*

5. The *tragedy of the commons* was made popular by:

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*a. Garret Hardin
b. James Madison
c. Socrates
d. Benjamin Franklin

RATIONALE: The tragedy of the commons was made popular by Garret Hardin in his eponymous article. To illustrate a problem with the application of pure capitalism, he uses the analogy of a group of farmers sharing a town commons leading to the destruction of the commons.

6. The opioid epidemic is treated as a state problem partly because:
   a. Opioid drugs are approved by the state.
   *b. Physicians who prescribe opiates are licensed by the state.
   c. Opioid drugs flow freely only within and not between states.
   d. All of the above

   RATIONALE: Opioid drugs are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and flow freely between states. However, the opioid epidemic is treated as a state problem partly because physicians, who are the prescribers of opiates, are licensed by the states. Further, if the opiates are being illegally manufactured, it remains a state policy enforcement issue, unless those illegal drugs are crossing state lines.

7. The separation of powers makes the development of public policy:
   a. Unfair
   *b. Slow
   c. The exclusive responsibility of the executive branch
   d. Easily abused

   RATIONALE: The framers of the Constitution did their best to set up a political structure that has multiple checks and balances due to a focus on liberty versus speed.

8. In the U.S. federal political system, citizens are subject to the authority of:
   a. Only the federal government
   b. Only the state government
   *c. Both the federal and state government, with federal law taking precedence in a conflict
   d. Both the federal and state government, with state law taking precedence due to state sovereignty

   RATIONALE: Citizens within a federal political system are subject to the authority of both levels of government. When there is a conflict between state and federal laws, the latter prevails due to the Supremacy Clause as stated in Article VI, Section 2 of the Constitution.

9. What is the problem of information asymmetries in the marketplace?
   *a. The lack of information for the buyer to make a rational choice
   b. The lack of free choice in the market

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c. The lack of information in general in the market
d. The intentional misinterpretation of information in the market

RATIONALE: Information asymmetry is the imbalance between two negotiating parties in their knowledge of relevant factors and details. In general, a seller/manufacturer has significantly greater access to information regarding the product/service than the buyer. This is an example of a potential market failure within a capitalist system.

10. Which of the following is an example of New Federalism?
    a. Civil rights legislation
    b. Social Security
    *c. Maternal and child health block grants
    d. Unemployment insurance

    RATIONALE: The Great Depression, World War II, and concerns about civil rights and poverty led to an increasing reliance on the federal government to address social problems. By the 1980s, a backlash known as New Federalism shifted the balance in the form of block grants, which allowed each state greater discretion as to how and where to spend federal money.

11. What was one of the major values behind the Articles of Confederation?
    a. Democracy
    b. Separation of powers
    *c. States' rights
    d. The perfection of the U.S. Constitution

    RATIONALE: The sovereignty of the thirteen states was a key value of the Articles of the Confederation. The Continental Congress was the only branch of government, and members were appointed by state legislatures rather than by popular elections. The U.S. Constitution was not written until 6 years after the Articles of Confederation went into effect.

12. One of the foundations of public health policies in the United States is the need to address the failures of:
    *a. Capitalism
    b. Federalism
    c. Prioritizing "freedom to" rather than "freedom from"
    d. Dillon's Rule

    RATIONALE: As illustrated by the story of the *tragedy of the commons*, capitalism's focus on profit can lead to unsustainable practices that harm the social good.

13. What was the key goal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)?
    a. Move the control over public health to the state level
    *b. Reduce the number of uninsured people
    c. Require all employers to offer health insurance to their employees

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d. Provide a national public health option

RATIONALE: In addition to decreasing the disparity in healthcare insurance among the various states, the other major goal of the PPACA was to reduce the number of people who were not covered by health insurance. Although a national public health option was part of the debate at the time, it was dropped as a compromise to get the bill passed.

14. Dillon's Rule refers to the principle of delegated powers as it relates to the authority of which of the following types of governments?
    a. Executive
    *b. Local
    c. State
    d. Federal

    RATIONALE: Unless a local government has been specifically delegated a power by its state's Constitution, statues, or regulations, the local government lacks the ability to pass local ordinances on that issue. This decision came from the Chief Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court in the mid-1880s, Judge Forest Dillon, and was widely adopted by other state supreme courts.

15. The U.S. Supreme Court (USSC) case of *Dobbs v. Jackson* declared:
    a. State law is supreme over local laws.
    b. Federal law is supreme over state law.
    c. *The previously declared right to obtain an abortion with restriction was not a guaranteed Constitutional right.
    d. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) can regulate prescription drugs.

    RATIONALE: Dillion's Rule governs state versus local laws; the Constitution asserts that federal law is supreme over state law; and the interstate commerce clause grants the FDA the ability to regulate pharmaceuticals. *Dobbs v. Jackson* broke the *stare decisis* decision that a women's right to an abortion infringed on the right to privacy and was constitutionally protected.

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