Chapter 3

1. Which of the following is an example of a *formal* element of candidate recruitment?

\*a. Residency requirements in the Constitution

b. Personal ambition

c. Public opinion shifting to favor legalizing same-sex marriage

d. Personal wealth that can be used to pay for campaign expenses

2. Which of the following is *not* a constitutional requirement of holding congressional office?

a. Age (25 in the House, 30 in the Senate)

\*b. Can serve a maximum of four terms

c. Citizenship

d. Residency in the state from which the individual is elected

3. Which of the following groups tends to be *overcounted* in the Census?

a. Homeless individuals

b. Children

\*c. College students

d. Immigrants

4. Which of the following is the basis of U.S. House seat apportionment?

a. The number of citizens living in each state

b. The number of voting-age adults in each state

c. The number of people who actively vote in each state

\*d. The number of people living in each state, legally or illegally

5. Which of these is *not* an example of gerrymandering?

\*a. Districts are drawn to cover the same amount of geographic area, even if this means that population varies between districts.

b. A state designs districts to ensure that most incumbent representatives will keep their seats in the next election.

c. A district is drawn to be 95% Republican so that neighboring districts are more difficult for the Republican party to win.

d. A Democratic-leaning urban area is split up into multiple districts and combined with suburban areas that are majority Republican.

6. Which of the following groups tends to be *undercounted* in the Census?

a. Teachers

\*b. Renters

c. Homeowners

d. Millionaires

7. Which of the following is an example of “unintentional gerrymandering”?

a. Independent commissions prioritize compact districts

\*b. Democrats tend to be packed into dense urban areas because of residential and geographic patterns

c. Republicans are able to create safe districts through partisan gerrymandering when winning a majority of state-level offices

d. The Senate contains many safe seats because of the way the Census is conducted

8. Which of the following rules has the Supreme Court applied to majority-minority districts?

a. States may not create majority-minority districts

b. Majority-minority districts may not impact partisan outcomes

\*c. Districts must be reasonably compact

d. Districting must use race as a predominant factor

9. Which of the following individuals would be considered an *amateur* in a U.S. House race?

a. A sitting state legislator

b. The mayor of a large city

c. A district attorney

\*d. A well-known TV host who covers politics

10. Which of the following is *not* a component of candidate quality?

\*a. An open seat (i.e., no incumbent)

b. Fundraising ability

c. Previous experience in public office

d. Name recognition

11. Which of the following situations is an example of strategic retirement?

a. A member of the House retires in order to run for President.

\*b. A member of the House retires after a damaging scandal is revealed.

c. A Senator retires because of term limits.

d. A Supreme Court justice retires because of health problems.

12. U.S. House and Senate candidates tend to look like a representative sample of everyday Americans.

a. True

\*b. False

13. The Supreme Court’s decisions on majority-minority districts have laid down clear and consistent rules and standards for states to follow.

a. True

\*b. False

14. Most minority members of the House of Representatives are elected from majority-minority districts.

\*a. True

b. False

15. Open seats tend to be the most competitive and thus are often the target of party strategists.

\*a. True

b. False

16. Majority-minority districts are created to enhance the probability of minorities being elected to Congress.

\*a. True

b. False

17. Men are more likely than women to see themselves as good candidates for political office, even when they have similar careers and experience.

\*a. True

b. False

18. Political parties play a major role in candidate recruitment to the U.S. House and Senate.

\*a. True

b. False

19. The residency requirement means that members of Congress must have been born in the state they represent.

a. True

\*b. False

20. Redistricting is a largely neutral, apolitical process that gives political parties little influence.

a. True

\*b. False

21. The laws around nominating candidates for congressional office vary widely among states.

\*a. True

b. False

22. Illegal immigrants are included in population counts that determine the number of House members apportioned to each state.

\*a. True

b. False

23. Each major party is required to field a candidate for House and Senate in each district or state.

a. True

\*b. False

24. The Supreme Court has ruled that partisan gerrymandering is acceptable under the Constitution.

\*a. True

b. False

25. Independents and minor party candidates make up a substantial proportion of both the House and Senate.

a. True

\*b. False

26. In a closed primary, candidates may only appear on the ballot after being explicitly approved by party leaders.

a. True

\*b. False

27. Contested primaries are most common when a strong incumbent is running.

a. True

\*b. False

28. Why did the drafters of the Constitution reject the idea of term limits for members of Congress?

\*a. Answers Vary

@The drafters of the Constitution had two main reasons for being suspicious of term limits for members of Congress. First, they believed the reelection motive was a powerful one and that removing it for final-term members would reduce the incentive to be a good representative. Second, they believed that expertise and experience were important qualities for good representation, and so members should not be excluded from the body just for having additional years of experience.

29. Why do incumbents often face low-quality challengers?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Because incumbents often win reelection, high-quality and strategic challengers typically avoid entering these races. These talented challengers will often wait for an open seat, which will be more competitive and give them a greater chance of success. Since high-quality challengers are often scared off, incumbents may be left with low-quality challengers that have little name recognition or fund raising potential, often political amateurs who are less strategic in entering races.

30. What is the difference between a closed primary and an open primary, and which do party leaders prefer?

\*a. Answers Vary

@In closed primaries, voters must declare their party affiliation and must belong to the party whose primary they are voting in. In open primaries, voters may vote in whichever primary they prefer, without declaring a party affiliation. Party leaders prefer closed primaries because they discourage outsider candidates and maximize their own influence on outcomes.

31. Why do political amateurs sometimes run for congressional office?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Some might be interested in raising awareness of a specific issue even though they have little chance of winning office. Others might simply enjoy campaigning and know that running for a long shot seat in a safe district for the other party is their only chance of getting a major-party nomination. Still others are simply self-deluded in believing they have a chance of winning. Finally, nonpolitical celebrities (broadly defined) may actually have a reasonable chance of winning despite the lack of political experience; this includes individuals who are war heroes, athletes, local personalities, and so on.

32. How does an amateur’s behavior differ from a professional’s in deciding which office to run for?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Professionals tend to be more strategic. While amateurs tend to be more willing to enter “long shot” races, professionals will carefully weigh a variety of factors before entering a race. These include whether a seat is open, how vulnerable the incumbent is, how well they fit into their party in Congress, their fundraising potential, and the broader political environment.

33. What are the two major problems of redistricting, and how have they been solved (or not)?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Malapportionment is defined as districts of unequal population in the same state. Supreme Court rulings in the 1960s outlawed this practice, requiring districts within each state to be divided on the basis of “one person, one vote.” Gerrymandering is the drawing of district lines to maximize seats for one party (or other voting bloc).

34. Is gerrymandering a major cause of polarization in Congress? Why or why not?

\*a. Answers Vary

@The political science literature largely says no; any effects, if they do exist, are relatively minor. One way to study this is to look at members in heavily tilted districts where one party gets the vast majority of voters and compare them to members in swing districts. Republicans from “safe” seats (whether gerrymandered or not) tend to vote similarly to those from swing seats, as do Democrats. We can also look at the fact that polarization has risen in the Senate, where gerrymandering is not possible.

35. Are majority-minority districts good or bad for minority representation in Congress?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Students could provide different answers here but should provide some competing evidence. On the one hand, most minority representatives come from majority-minority districts and the racial composition of a district is the biggest predictor of the race of its representative. On the other hand, majority-minority districts may amount to “packing” in a way that can “waste” minority votes and skew surrounding districts to be disproportionately white.

36. What are influence districts and why do some Democrats prefer them to majority-minority districts?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Influence districts contain 35–40 % minority voters instead of greater than 50%. The idea is that minority voters would have a significant influence in more districts, instead of “wasting” their votes in districts that have a very high percentage minority voters. This might create more members of Congress that are responsive to minority needs (or, more cynically, might create more Democratic districts).

37. What role do political parties play in congressional candidate recruitment?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Students should list and describe party activities from the following list: encouraging candidates to run, assisting with filing deadlines, handing the financial side of campaigns, lending supporter lists, recruitment calls from high-profile office holders.

38. Why do congressional candidates typically choose to work through one of the two major parties?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Simply put, parties can provide candidates with resources. These include money, strategic/logistical assistance, and “brand loyalties” that come with their name and can win the candidate a sizeable number of votes.

39. How do political scientists measure candidate quality?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Candidate quality is measured on the basis of strategic resources and personal attributes. These include previous experience in public office, name recognition, physical appearance, personality, speaking ability, organizational talent, fund-raising ability, and a desire/ability to commit to a demanding campaign schedule.

40. Select one of the Supreme Court cases on redistricting or voting rights mentioned in Chapter 3. Outline the major arguments on each side of the case and the justifications used by Supreme Court justices in making their ruling. How has this case impacted congressional elections?

\*a. Answers Vary

@Students should select one of several cases listed in the chapter and make connections to material on representation as well as redistricting from the text in analyzing the decision and its impacts.

41. Choose a House race from the most recent electoral cycle and explain how candidate recruitment played a role in the election. Were the candidates amateurs or professionals? Were party organizations an important factor, and if so, how?

\*a. Answers Vary

@In analyzing the chosen race, students should consider factors such as whether the seat was open or the incumbent was vulnerable and how this influenced the strategic calculus of the challenger, the resources available (or not available) to each candidate, and the resources that parties chose to provide to each candidate.