PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

64

American Institutions. The Constitution. Territorial Organisation. The President. Congress. Political Parties and the Electoral System

Las instituciones estadounidenses. La Constitución. La organización territorial. El presidente. El Congreso. Los partidos políticos y el sistema electoral.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"If men were angels, no government would be necessary." With these words, written in 1788 in Federalist No. 51, James Madison summed up the problem that the framers of the American Constitution tried to solve: how to give a government enough power to control the governed and, at the same time, oblige it to control itself. Almost two and a half centuries later, that question still explains why American institutions look the way they do. Welcome to Topic 64: American Institutions. The Constitution. Territorial Organisation. The President. Congress. Political Parties and the Electoral System.

In order to address this topic, I will divide it into six sections. Firstly, I will examine the Constitution: its origins, its structure and its amendments. Secondly, I will describe the territorial organisation of the country, that is, federalism, the states, the District of Columbia and the territories. Thirdly, I will analyse the presidency. Fourthly, I will turn to Congress. Fifthly, I will study political parties and the electoral system. Finally, I will reflect on the pedagogical and didactic implications of this content in our current educational framework, before concluding.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for the preparation of this topic. These include The Federalist Papers by Hamilton, Madison and Jay, Robert A. Dahl's How Democratic Is the American Constitution?, and Richard E. Neustadt's Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents, as well as the official online sources of the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Census Bureau. All data on current institutions are given as of November 2026. I have also drawn on the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020), Real Decreto 217/2022 and 243/2022, and Decreto 110/2022 and 109/2022 of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura.