

## Some Suggestions for Improving Exam Performance

✓ **Take Pride in Academic Achievement**

*The challenges of learning are an important part of personal and professional identity. A positive and responsive perspective about learning will help you learn.*

✓ **Dedicate Time**

*If you are in class 6 hours per week, out of class study should be 12 hours per week. You need time on task for success in a college course.*

✓ **Persist**

*Stay with it. It is very easy to procrastinate, find an alternative use of time, etc. If you can sit through the discomfort, concentration toward study becomes easier over time.*

✓ **Attend Class and Be There**

*Be alert in class. Take detailed notes and ask questions when uncertain. Try to get sufficient rest and exercise to enhance your ability to focus.*

✓ **Read Text**

*Reading with comprehension is important. Be sure to carefully review practice questions and key terms at the end of each chapter.*

### Maximizing Point Totals on Exams - Identifications

#### Section II (15 points) - Identifications

Identifications will require the student to describe or define (2 points) and explain one significance (3 points).

#### **Natural Rights**

**Begin with a clear sentence or two.** For example:

Originally stated by John Locke, **natural rights** is a concept that underlies democratic political systems. Natural rights exist at birth so they are not given by government and cannot be taken away by government (unalienable) and are applicable to all people (self-evident). **This (term/idea) is significant because it:**

**any one of the following**

- helps explain the concept of liberty in the American political system.
- forms the basis of the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution.
- offered hope and opportunity that stimulated immigration to America.
- provides a rationale for the growth of freedom and equality in democratic systems.

## Maximizing Point Totals on Exams – Focused Essay

### **Section III (15 points) – Focused Essay**

Response to the question or situation posed should be (1) logical in terms of structure and presentation, (2) coherent in terms of language, (3) competent in terms of content and definition and (4) effectively illustrated with appropriate ideas and/or facts.

Define the concept of political performance and select what are, from your perspective, the **four** (4) most important indicators of political performance in the current U.S. political system. Explain your selections.

**Begin with a topic sentence that makes clear the purpose of the question. For example:**

The concept of **political performance** describes an effort to determine or measure the effectiveness and efficiency of a nation's political system. The performance of the U.S. Political system can be influenced by many specific indicators including:

#### 1. Life Expectancy

A measure of individual health and quality of life, this indicator informs us about the government's ability to monitor and control various health factors (nutrition, air and water quality, medical technology, etc.). The U.S. ranks well in this area with a relatively high level of life expectancy (79).

#### 2. Poverty

A measure of economic and social conditions, this indicator informs us about the percentage of the population who are in need of government to survive the needs and challenges of daily life (poverty rate). The U.S. ranks poorly in this area with the highest levels of poverty among democratic nations (41%).

#### 3. Education

A measure of educational achievement, this indicator informs us about the levels of knowledge, skill and ability the nation has to solve current and future problems (graduation rates at various levels, learning assessment for various subjects). The U.S. ranking in this area has dropped in recent years and is in need of improvement (College Graduation 41%, lower ratings than many nations in math, science, reading, etc.).

#### 4. Human Rights

A measure of liberty and personal freedom, this indicator informs us about the expectations of citizens as members of society (the Bill of Rights and subsequent constitutional rights). The U.S. ranks highly in this area with numerous established rights (speech, press, religion, criminal procedure, etc.).