

**American Government Term Paper**  
**Federalism**  
**Ms. McKittrick**

**Due Date: Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Page Requirement: 5-6 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, size 12**

**Introduction:** Federalism means that the state and national governments have both separate and overlapping functions. In general, the national government has authority over defense and international and interstate trade. States have authority over their local economies and moral and social issues. However, the national government can influence state policies through the grant process and protect the rights of all citizens. This paper requires the degree to which the national government should be able to influence policymaking at the state level.

From the list below, pick an issue. You may pick an issue not on this list, with teacher permission.

Marijuana  
The drinking age  
Healthcare  
Welfare/food stamps  
Clean Air / power plant emissions  
Wind and Solar power  
Gun control  
Doctor-assisted suicide

You will use the Cherry Creek High School databases to research background information on the issues you selected. You will be directed to which databases will be most helpful when we meet in the computer lab. Describe the controversy surrounding the issues you chose, and the current level of state and federal involvement. Consider the following arguments when formulating your opinion:

Arguments for leaving substantial power with the states:

1. States can better tailor laws to local conditions.
2. States can provide a laboratory to test innovative ideas which, if successful, can then be adopted by other jurisdictions.
3. Leaving power with the states promotes laws that better reflect the values of a majority of people governed by the laws.

Arguments for having power reside in the federal government:

1. "Enlarging the sphere" makes it less likely that oppressive majorities can form to harm minorities.
2. The national government generally will have more expertise than state governments.

3. Certain rights should belong to all citizens of the U. S.
4. Uniform laws better facilitate the flow of commerce.
5. Efficiency: the exercise of federal power can avoid a duplication of resources by the various states.
6. State power can lead to "the race to the bottom" (pollution laws, usury laws, etc.)
7. Federal power can prevent states from soaking out-of-state visitors and companies (e.g., excessive tolls on interstate highways)

**Organization:** Please organize your paper as follows:

- I. Introduction (one half page), with background of Federalism and a thesis such as, “Based on needs of the American people and the reserved powers of the states, the issue of \_\_\_\_\_ illustrates the [extent **OR** limits] to which the Federal Government should be able to influence policy decisions at the state level.”
- II. Issue One (one and a half pages)
  - a. Background of the issue, including history
  - b. Federal government’s current role
  - c. State government’s current role
- III. Your opinion (two pages) [must include support from the Constitution and/or Supreme Court Cases] and detail the extent to which Federal and state governments should have control over this issue [must have Constitutional and/or case support!] Please do a thorough analysis of your researched topic and make clear, supported arguments
- IV. Conclusion (one half page)—summarize main points and restate thesis in a different way.
- V. Bibliography
  - a. Must contain citations from at least three databases
  - b. Must NOT contain information from Wikipedia or blogs
  - c. Must be produced using Easybib

**Notes:** **MUST** use parenthetical citations throughout the paper. This means there will be a citation after every fact, whether quoted or paraphrased, where you used a source to obtain the information. This means every paragraph will have at least one citation.

**MUST** be submitted to turnitin.com by the due date

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**MUST NOT** use first or second person anywhere in the paper

**Rubric for American Government Term Paper  
Ms. McKittrick**

Introduction/Thesis	/____5
Background of First Issue	/____20
Federal Government's current role	/____/10
State Governments' current role	/____/10
Your Opinion on First Issue	/____/20
Conclusion	/____5
Bibliography	/____10
Citations	/____10
Spelling and Mechanics	/____10
TOTAL	/____100