AP United States Government
Chapter 8 Study Guide – Political Parties

Name: __________________________

Key Terms: On index cards, define the following terms.
1. Factions
2. Political party
3. Party-in-the-electorate
4. Party organization
5. National convention
6. Party platform
7. National committee
8. State central committee
9. Patronage
11. Divided government
12. Ticket splitting
13. Party polarization
14. Safe seats
15. Two-party system
16. Plurality
17. Winner-take-all system
18. Third parties
19. Realignment
20. Realignment
21. Party identification
22. Straight-ticket voting
23. Swing voters
24. Tipping

Questions: Complete the following as you read chapter 8 in your textbook.

1. Read the What If? section on page 265. Do you think nominating conventions still perform a useful function?

2. What are political parties, and why were our founders wary of them?

3. What are the differences between political parties and interest groups?

4. Describe the following functions of political parties.
   a. Recruiting candidates:
   b. Organizing elections:
   c. Presenting policies to voters:
   d. Operating the government:
   e. Acting as opposition:

5. How do parties function within the electorate?

6. How do parties function as organizations?
7. What is the purpose of creating a party platform?

8. Describe the role of the national committee.

9. How do state and local parties relate to national parties?

10. How do parties function in government?

11. Why is party unity not always guaranteed in government?

12. What demographic groups are typically Democrats and Republicans?

13. How do Democrats and Republicans differ on public policies?

14. Explain the following reasons for the endurance of our two-party system.
   a. Historical foundations:
   
   b. Political socialization:
   
   c. Winner-take-all system:
   
   d. State and federal laws:
15. What are “third parties”?

16. What types of third parties exist in America?

17. What is the role of third parties in American politics?

18. Describe the concepts of voter realignment and realigning elections.

19. What is the argument behind political dealignment?

20. What is the future of political parties in the United States?