



Comparing
Constitutions
U.S. Constitution
vs.
NC Constitution



US Constitution Breakdown

- **Preamble** : purpose and intent of government
 - **7 articles** : one for each branch (L,E,J), states powers
- **Amendment changes**, supremacy F>S, and ratification
 - 27 amendments
- – **First 10 are the Bill of Rights** (AF)
- – Amendments are **added** to the end of the Constitution

NC Constitution Breakdown

- **Preamble** : purpose and intent of government
- **14 Different Articles**
- – **Article 1** discusses the Declaration of Rights
 - Similar to the U.S. Bill of Rights
 - Holds 37 sections (or rights)
- – **Articles 2-4** discuss the three branches (L,E,J)
- – **Articles 5-14** discuss state matters (i.e. finance, local government, crime and punishment, etc.)
- • Amendments are NOT added at the end, the Constitution is just changed each time

Principles found in both documents

- **Federalism:** separation of federal and state government (allows state governments to exist and have powers)
- **Separation of Powers:** there are three separate NC branches
- **Checks and Balances:** each branch can check the power of the others
- **Popular Sovereignty:** power is in the hands of the people
- **Limited Government:** actions of government are limited by law
- **• Rule of Law:** Law applies to everyone

Most Common Amendment Processes

U.S. Constitution

- 2/3 of Congress propose
- • 3/4 of States approve
- • The voter is not involved in the process

N.C. Constitution

- 3/5 of General Assembly (NC's legislative branch) propose
- • NC voters ratify by popular vote
- • Voters are given the power

Charters: Local Constitutions

- The NC Constitution gives the state the power to approve charters to create new cities/towns
- • A **Charter** is a constitution for a local government – gives a city or town authority to act as a local government and explains how it will be governed