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, and ratification • **27 amendments**

• – **First 10 are the Bill of Rights**

• – **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 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
  - **Protection of personal rights** through Declaration of Rights (NC) or Bill of Rights (US Constitution)
## Most Common Amendment Processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Constitution</th>
<th>N.C. Constitution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 2/3 of Congress propose</td>
<td>• 3/5 of General Assembly (NC’s legislative branch) propose</td>
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<td>• 3/4 of States approve</td>
<td>• NC voters ratify by popular vote</td>
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<td>• The voter is not directly involved in the process</td>
<td>• Voters are given the power</td>
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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
Local and State Laws

• Ordinance --- Local Laws

• Statute --- State Laws
US vs NC Constitution Assignment

• On a sheet of notebook paper make a T-chart.
• Label one side “Similarities” and the other
• “Differences”