Politics exemplars – answers only
A level SAMs
Component 1 UK Politics

Question 1 a)

Evaluate the view that UK democracy is in crisis.
In your response you must:
- compare the different opinions in the source
- use a balance of knowledge and understanding both arising from the source and beyond the source to help you to analyse and evaluate.

Response 1

There have been many claims that UK democracy is in crisis and that it is beset with a number of serious problems. There is also an opposing view which suggests that there is no crisis and the democratic system in the UK operates well.

It can seem that we have a crisis as the source notes the low participation level at General elections and that this is lower than in past elections. It is important that people vote in elections to show that they care about the country. It is as if people could not be bothered to get involved in decisions which have an impact on them. There are new institutions but these have had no impact on how and why people participate. Devolution has not truly worked in favour of participation. So democracy is subject to a big ‘switch off’ and people do not care or feel that they make no difference to the political system as it does not connect to them.

The source is suggesting that a lot of trust has been lost by the public in politicians; they do not feel that they can any longer trust politicians with making the right decisions and are simply there for themselves. In the past few years many politicians have served jail sentences for their conduct. Also the source suggests that the parties have to compete and motivate the public to get them involved. So political parties are letting people down and they do not create a bond or a feeling of trust with large numbers, we can see this as party membership is low.

Democracy is in crisis due to the fact that we have low turnout for elections and people do not know or are informed about the main issues of the day. A way to fix that would
be compulsory voting and also lowering the voting age this will bring more people into politics. If people were educated and informed they would also know more and be able to take part, it is as if they are apathetic and have no concern. The source says that politics has to become more important and respectable.

We can see that there is a crisis as few people now join political parties and they have little understanding of how the political process works this leads to them being disengaged and lacking information about current events which may have an impact on them.

However the source does move to say that the problem can be fixed and that politicians are the best people who can mend the broken system. There are good things happening in democracy in the UK. Deep down people do care and want to get involved but it is up to politicians to get them involved and to start to care. The source says that we have to look to other things than simply voting in elections to understand the problem.

Democracy in the UK can be revived and improved with the use of a range of modern techniques – these include digital democracy and more referendums. The referendum on the EU in June 2016 made people get involved and motivated. Democracy is all about individual having a say. But when a party holds a majority of seats with less than 50% of the vote it is unfair and reforms are needed. So to fix democracy in the UK we need more reforms to make the system better and more accurate, this will convince people that their vote and actions matter. Lowering the voting age is another factor which would help as 16 and 17 year olds can make decisions on major issues and know a lot about current events, this would lift participation.

Response 2

The source highlights several issues facing democracy in the UK today – it was written in 2014 before the last election and before the EU referendum in 2016 which saw turnout levels at 72%. The source presents a cause for concern surrounding UK democracy and notes a participation crisis, a failure of trust by the UK population in their politicians and an accompanying failure of the recent constitutional changes introduced by Labour since 1997 (and to an extent successive governments) to address the problem of low participation rates in UK politics. However not all is as bleak as can appear on first sight according to the source for it identifies active participation beyond the ballot box and shows a more positive view of participation where people remain confident in the political system and importantly the importance and relevance of voting which it asserts
does make a difference – rejecting the adage: ‘If voting changed anything they would abolish it!’ The source then touches on why this alleged crisis has arisen and offers a solution to remedy the situation. Let us take a look at these contrasting and at times conflicting views.

The views contained in the source and relevant supplementary information highlights a clear crisis in democracy in the UK. Firstly on participation levels alone we have seen in the 20th century and into the 21st century falling levels of turnout – the low point being 2001 which saw turnout at 59% for the general election, turnout falls even more dramatically when we look at lower order elections which would be local government, EU elections and more recently elections for Police Commissioners. This points to a malaise in political activity after all, voting is the life blood of a representative democracy, for when this fails there is a problem at the core of the system. Furthermore the source then details the lack of political engagement which has emerged from the various constitutional changes in recent years. Of these devolution is one of the most relevant – and here after an initial exuberance we see faith and activity fall in turnout levels, we see frustration in the remaining an unelected second chamber and an inability to agree to replace the current first past the post voting system which sees governments form on around a quarter of the possible votes available. Public faith in politicians – of all parties and views has fallen. The political system both in terms of personality and of structure is not meeting the demands and aspirations of the people. As such this may be an anti-establishment move as seen by a rejection of leading politicians and parties over Europe and replicated in the US with the election of Donald Trump viewed as a person outside the normal political framework.

We could conclude that in overview there is much wrong with democracy in the UK and the title of ‘crisis’ is both accurate and relevant. With low engagement we arrive at a situation where there is no real legitimacy, politicians and their parties cannot claim a mandate with such a narrow band of support. Furthermore the source presents a pessimistic view of both politicians and the newly created reforms such as devolution as both do not appear to be up to the mark in engaging people and gaining their trust.

However the source also indicates a contrasting position for democracy in the UK and begins this by suggesting that we need to look deeper and see political participation from a wider angle than voting turnout alone. In the 21st century getting involved in politics has a wider remit than simply voting. People can be involved in petitions, social media activities and a host of other avenues to voice their political views. Voting can be seen as a once in a five year activity at national level but activity can take place regularly to check and prompt the government. For instance the government backed down in 2011 over the sell-off of the Forestry Commission when a united effort composed of many organisations and interests combined together to voice their concern. Furthermore over recent years we have seen a rise in other parties contesting for the vote and being successful over the two parties (Labour and Conservative) who shared office exclusively between 1945 and 2010. This indicates we have a pluralist democracy with ample and realistic choice. Turnout levels did fall in 2001 to below 60% but have
since risen from this low point, the very high profile referendum on EU membership gaining a turnout of 72%.

In a similar vein the high profile cases of sleaze which has made an impact on political life seems to have died down. Politicians know that more than ever they are now under a close media spotlight and will be exposed for financial and other irregularities.

The source accepts that democracy in the UK faces a challenge – but that the label of ‘crisis’ does not accurately fit. It hints that there is work to be done – but it is not a huge task to rectify. Furthermore the rectification or renewal of UK democracy can come according to the source from politicians themselves. However such a hope is stretching the limits of belief, how is that politicians who have damaged the process and form part of a political elite can suddenly find the motivation and drive to restore democracy?

In conclusion it does appear on balance that democracy in the UK is experiencing a type of crisis, it has major problems in engaging people, true it may not be a deep crisis – but a significant one. The hope that politicians will somehow assist to self-right the system, as evidenced in the source lacks any real evidence or plan. Democracy has been a journey in the UK, it has evolved and continues to adapt to new circumstances, it is not the ‘finished product’ but very much a work in progress.

A level SAMs
Component 1 Core political ideas

Question 3 (a)

To what extent do modern and classical liberals agree over the role of the state?
You must use appropriate thinkers you have studied to support your answer.

Response 1

Liberalism has a major internal divide between classical liberals who formed the early part of the development of the doctrine in the 19th century and modern liberals rooted in the 20th century, two wings of the dominant political doctrine which has shaped modern society.
Liberalism like the other core political ideas has clear internal divisions and behind these there are differences (and also similarities) over key topics: the state neatly fits these criteria. We can see a distinct view of the state emerging with classical liberals and similarly a major re-appraisal of the state's role by modern liberals All political doctrines with the exception of anarchists accept the need for the state in some form or other and acknowledge that it has an impact on citizens lives.

Let us first look at the area where there is common ground shared between classical and modern liberals. All liberals believe that the state has power in society and from the outset they endorse that the state should be the ultimate source of law and protect its citizens – as Locke said 'Where there is no law there is no freedom'. What this means is that for society to be safe the state has to provide a framework of criminal laws and also the state has to provide a set of civil laws – essentially so that business and commerce can operate with certainty. The state has to protect its citizens from harm so all liberals will offer the state as to protect internally by providing a court and police system and externally from threats which may arise from other countries an army to defend the borders and integrity of the state.

Allied to this view of the state between classical and modern liberals is the view which endorses that the state should promote freedom and toleration. The state is there to protect all citizens and allow for a divergence of views and opinions. This theme was seen with Voltaire and then JS Mill the state has to protect all of its citizens from the abuse of power as R.H. Tawney said 'The freedom of the pike is death to all minnows' and in contemporary (modern) liberals with political thinkers such as Rawls endorses freedom as a core value to be supported by the state.

All liberals also are committed to the requirement that the state emerges and gains support through the consent of the people, it can be replaced and changed if the people desire this. Whereas Hobbes may have been willing to accept a cruel state, liberals favour Locke's view of consent surrounding the state in that its authority is given and taken away by the people, so the state exists because the people desire it to do so. In essence this shows that all liberals subscribe to the principle of a social contract – which limits the state and keeps it subject to citizens' will

However, although there are clear common bonds which unite classical and modern liberals there are also tensions. This is best understood in terms of the origins of each branch of liberalism. Classical liberalism emerged in response to the absolute power of monarchs and tyrants; as such liberals feared that the return of despotic rule in minority hands, they did not wish the state's role to grow beyond what they termed a night-watchman's role – or a minimal state.

It had to be minimal for two core reasons, firstly to prevent individuals from taking over its role and secondly to allow business to have as much freedom from the state to act as a locomotive of growth and wealth.
If classical liberals are fearful of the actions of the state modern liberals are far more positive of its role. Again from a historical perspective modern liberals saw the benefits of an industrial society but also the huge imbalances in life chances which it created. Modern liberals such as T.H Green and Rawls wanted the state to take more responsibility for the welfare of all citizens. This was most clearly seen in the work of William Beveridge who began the idea of the state providing support ‘from the cradle to the grave’ – this saw modern liberals in the post war era vastly expand the functions and responsibilities of the state. This links closely to the economic role of the state – whereas classical liberals endorsed the views of economists such as Adam Smith modern liberals championed the work of Keynes. With classical liberals believing the state caused harm if it intervened in the economy and modern liberals thinking that the state had to act in the economy to remedy its faults.

In overview classical liberals fear the state and think that it may curb or restrict freedom, but modern liberals think that the state is a guarantee of freedom as William Beveridge said ‘How can a starving man be free?’

Liberalism is a broad and encompassing ideology and there are areas of both agreement and disagreement in the ideas of classical and modern liberals. Proof that both strands are relevant is the fact that regimes use both strands to justify their actions, classical liberalism endorsed by Mrs Thatcher and Ronald Reagan and modern liberalism remaining in practice with the NHS and welfare in the UK.

Response 2

Liberalism is said to be a very flexible political doctrine which covers both classical and modern liberalism. Only anarchists would say that we do need a state, liberals know that we need a state but are unsure of how big and what responsibility the state should have.

All liberals agree that the state is there to protect people and make sure that there is no breakdown in society and that bad people are punished and possibly put in prison. So
liberals see the need for laws to protect those who are vulnerable and weak and could be taken advantage of. They want the state to step in to prevent harm being caused.

All liberals want business to operate freely and to employ people and create wealth. So the state should allow business to function freely in the economy. The economy is vitally important for all liberals as it seen as the creator of wealth and opportunity – more so than the state.

All liberals believe that people should be free and offer maximum liberty under the law – they feel that choices in life are personal and unique and as such it is not the province or domain of the state to tell people how to think – we can see this as all liberals would endorse the state to protect all religions and not to support bigotry or favouritism. Many states that follow religious persecution are frowned on by all liberals - they believe it is not the state that should enforce religious worship or practice but this should be the realm of individual choice. The ideas of early liberalism heavily influenced the establishment of the USA and religious tolerance is one of their cherished liberties – built on liberal values.

Furthermore we can look to the USA again for how the state should relate to the individual. Here the common theme for all liberals regarding the state is that its role should be prescribed and set out – preferably in a written constitution. The state should have set limits to its powers and areas of action. Furthermore, according to liberals the state should set out its relationship to its citizens' preferably in a bill of rights, this was done with the US Bill of Rights and is still done in modern countries – in Europe most states have adopted and integrated the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) a body which pre-dates the EU and is larger in number. This consistent commitment to regulating the state runs through modern and classical liberalism and stems from an intrinsic belief in the notion of consent. The state exists and continues in this role for it has the consent of the people. If the state loses that consent and permission it loses its authority and can be replaced. Hence all liberals support constitutional arrangements which see the power of the state divided and distributed wherever possible, indeed federalism is a consistent model which all liberals would prefer in a state.

However from this widespread shared view of the state there does emerge a divergence between classical and modern liberals. Classical liberals can invariably see no wrong in how business operates and believe in a laissez faire approach to control by the state in the economy. They believe that the motor which drives prosperity and growth is unfettered business pursuing its own self interest. Modern liberals by contrast see the problems of an unregulated economy from many angles, but primarily the differing life chances which are thrown up in a laissez faire economy. Modern liberals wish to see the opportunities offered by a market economy to be better distributed and that the state should at least provide some safety net for the more vulnerable old and weak. Hence liberals in the 20th century built welfare models so that the state took up this responsibility for its citizens. Modern liberals believe in the capacity of the state to do good but classical liberals see a meddling state as injurious to wider welfare.
Classical liberals are concerned with a growing and powerful state that they fear will abuse its power and take away liberty and freedom from citizens, as such they cite the repressive regimes which have existed in some countries where power has been corrupted by those who hold it and people's liberty has been extinguished by a dominant state. Modern liberals in contrast see the role of the state as essential in guaranteeing and protecting citizens' liberty and freedoms. Modern liberals would argue that to provide welfare and education for its citizens is a sure way of creating a plural and diverse society which will not tolerate those who abuse the power of the state.

In many ways the arguments between classical and modern liberals are both attractive and persuading although out of the same political school they present differing views of the role and scope of the state in society. To back this up we can see governments and political parties from across the political spectrum taking ideas for each section of liberalism and applying it to how the state should function in society.

Component 3 Comparative Politics - USA

Question 1 (a)

Examine the ways in which the US and the UK Constitutions are similar.

Response 1

The UK and the US both have Constitutions. There are a number of similarities and differences between them. Here I am going to explain some of those similarities.

One similarity between them is that they both have written parts. The US
Constitution is one written document that tells the government how to work. The UK Constitution comes from lots of sources including laws and certain books.

Another similarity between them is that both Constitutions explain how the government should work. For example the US Constitution says that there should be a President and a Congress. The UK Constitution says that there should be two parts to Parliament and that the Prime Minister should be in charge.

Both Constitutions can also be changed by governments. The US Constitution has been amended 27 times and even though it is difficult to change, it is still possible to make changes to it. The UK Constitution can be changed all the time just by passing a law. Big changes to the UK Constitution have included leaving the EU after the referendum last year and giving Scotland its own Parliament.

In conclusion, there are many similarities between the UK and the US Constitutions, such as both being written down, both explain how the government works, and both can be amended.
Response 2

One significant similarity between the US and UK Constitutions is their ability to be amended. For example, an amendment can be suggested by any member of Congress. This then has to be debated and voted on and agreed to be passed by 2/3 of both houses of Congress, and then has to be ratified by ¾ of the states before it can be added to the Constitution. This has happened 27 times in the history of the USA. The most well-known amendments are the Bill of Rights.

The UK Constitution can also be amended, but this is a much easier process than in the USA. The UK Constitution can be amended simply by passing a law with a majority vote in Parliament. This still needs to be agreed by both houses of Parliament, like in the US Congress, but it does not need to be agreed by the other governments of the UK such as the Scottish Parliament. This is because the UK Parliament is sovereign.

The US and UK Constitutions also protect people's rights. The most famous amendments to the US Constitution are the Bill of Rights. This is the first 10 amendments to the US Constitution and was written to protect people's rights. The UK also has a constitutional law that protects people's rights called the Human Rights Act. Both the Bill of Rights and the Human Rights Act are documents that the ordinary people, lawyers and courts can refer to when they want to check if their rights have been protected or broken.

The court systems in both countries can also use the Constitutions to protect people's rights. For example, the Bill of Rights is often used to protect freedom of speech. One recent case where this happened was when Abercrombie and Fitch were sued for refusing to allow a Muslim woman to wear a hijab to work. This case went to the Supreme Court, and was successful. Similarly, in the UK, a gay couple successfully sued the owners of a B&B who refused to let them stay because homosexuality was against their religion.

Finally, the constitutions also have some similarities because they both allow the US and the UK to distribute power. The US has a federal system which is written down in the Constitution itself, and gives the federal government and the state governments particular powers of their own. For example, the federal government set national laws on issues like taxes, but the state governments set state laws on issues like education and driving licences. The UK Constitution also gives some power away to the devolved countries.
Spec Paper -> Evaluate the extent to which cultural globalisation has had a greater impact on the world than any other form of globalisation.

Cultural globalisation is the spread of similar menus and styles from one part of the world to another, creating a flattening out of differences, leading to a homogenised world. It is a type of globalisation which itself is the spread of commodities into a global system such as economic globalisation brought the spread of the use of free market. South Korea president said "Culture is power" and this is representative of a shift of opinion to nonso the society being praised by numerous countries, encouraged by spread of democracy since the collapse of communism in 1991.

Liberals believe that cultural globalisation is a great asset in moving towards a state of world government maintained through the need of complex interdependence of states to rely on each other. Through a shared flow of norms and aspirations countries can unite together to come about changing nationality of global international system to mirror that of their shared values. Therefore, the UN, a prime example of effective global governance in many terms charged aspirations shown by the creation of the IAEA and IPCC to deal with the issues of global concern now.

Furthermore cultural globalisation causes a homogenes society with cultural differences being flattened out amongst states. For example, Samuelson said "globalisation is an assault on national sovereignty" and...
Keineke echoed this with "Globalisation has brought the end of the nation". For example, governments have to use MNC's and big cooperate brands like apple to make trade deals crucial to the economy stability and thus must give us their culture as well. Today there is 123 democracies in the world and 118 of them have McDonalds. Solidifying sales clearly that it's a "McWord".

One of the main examples of cultural globalization is the explosion of media and its consequences. For example, social networking sites like Facebook and Instagram allow global connection through live video recordings, transmitted across the globe in seconds. Media is also a tool for the spreading of news - for example, Anti-Trump campaign is now huge. Using media to their advantage to achieve the most signatures on a petition to stop the state visit of Mr Trump to the UK. Furthermore, the real significance and successful impact of cultural globalization, through media, was proved by the 2011 Arab Spring. Started in Tunisia, enough energy of their message and success stories it caused a catalysed apple over many of the Middle East demanding democracy.

However cultural globalization through the spreading of ideas can also create a backlash from areas such as the Middle East and North Africa who see these new cultures as distasteful. For example, many Islamic militant groups use cultural globalization as a means for recruitment, claiming it is European and American/Imperialism...
Trying to overtake their beliefs. This clash of civilization was described by Huntington in 1993, where he used fault lines to discuss how terrorism and hatred can dwell inside them.

An example of backlash is that of the 7/7 bombings in London, which was a punishment on the UK people for their support of Israel in fighting Palestinians. The group was educated on this matter by cultural globalization, showing it has had only a negative effect in causing more tension amongst states and asymmetrical groups.

There is further an argument that economic globalization has been far more impactful than that of cultural on the international system. This can be highlighted through the signing of 175 trade deals between 1997 and 2001, which is a key feature of economic globalization. Another is the spread of the free market which is apparent by the extreme consequences that the collapse of the US economy triggered in 2007, leading to a world wide recession which countries are still heavily indebted from. This means countries are more dependent on economic rather than cultural globalization.

It can also be said that political globalization may have had a larger impact than that of cultural. For example, 65% of the world is now a democracy since the collapse of communism in 1991. There has also been a huge spread in the number and size of global government bodies such as the UN, NATO, EU. This is further highlighted
Through the spread of more powerful international law agencies, for example R2P created in 2005. This collectively shows that each policy globalization is more likely to have had lasting consequences as opposed to cultural globalization, and is therefore more superior.

In combination all 3 types of globalization all simultaneously aid each other. For example the spread of democracy wouldn't have been possible without the advances made available to the governing parties (economic) nor without the change in ideals that wanted the change to new political system (cultural). Therefore it is hard to judge their individual worth when as a unit they are significantly more influential on global system.

In conclusion I think cultural globalization effects shouldn't be dismissed, however it is imperative that all 3 continue to work together to allow for the quickest and most successful development of internal system that's possible.
Globalisation is the spread of multinational corporations around the world, influencing our lives. This can take the form of political, economic & cultural globalisation. People have claimed that cultural globalisation has had a bigger impact on our lives than any other form of globalisation.

Now a days people are more likely to go to a ‘Frankies & Bennies’ or a ‘Nandos’, than sit at home as family and have a Sunday dinner ‘Mum’ made. Which shows how cultural globalisation has changed our outlook on life as it has changed the way we spend our lives. 50 years ago everyone had a Sunday Dinner at 4 O’Clock, but this never happens due to the multinational corporations.

In Asia there is a tradition that the village is put before the individual. However, as globalisation has spread, these values have been denounced. This is due to people being able to move more freely, & get away quicker than ever. Also branding has brought selfishness to society as people want ‘Jack Wills’, not ‘Some George by Asda’ or a jumper your mum made for you.

Supermarkets have taken the sense of community out of our culture. Now, you can go to get a loaf of bread, some apples, milk, packet of cigarettes &
a newspaper in the space of three ailles. Years ago you need to go to the separate shops for them. or for a greezer to come round to your house. This culture has been taken away as you can now pop in Asda for all these. There is now no sense of culture with Asda or Waitrose.

However, there are others who say that other forms of globalization have had a bigger impact one on our lives.

Political globalization is a big one. When countries sell off state assets big US companies come and snap them up. This spreads the US’s sphere of influence as their companies have control of state assets, which means the US has a thumb on the head of the companies these countries are in.

Economic globalization is the spread of multinational companies around the globe. This is known as ‘McDonaldization’ as we Americanize our lives with theirgap burgers & pickup trucks. These American ways are their ways of us buying into their industries & spreading their power.

In conclusion, there is a lot of evidence that cultural globalization is the most important form of globalization, as nearly every form of globalization links to it.
Explain the criticisms that have been made of both the IMF and the World Bank.

The IMF and the World Bank were created in 1944 as part of the Bretton Woods system. A collection of international organisations committed to global economic cooperation in lieu of the Second World War, providing a thickening web of multilateral agreements and the means by which lesser economically developed countries (LEDCs) can develop their economy. However, like most forms of global governance, the IMF and the World Bank are outdated and aging, causing much criticism.

Like many other international organisations, both institutions are heavily Western dominated, with both headquarters being in the US and, as such, due to tradition and convention, the president of the World Bank is always an American citizen. Despite the recent appointment of Jim Yong Kim as President in 2012, the first person from Asian origin, this US structural domination has led to many in the South arguing that the Bank is biased, favoring the North and only benefiting LEDCs. This is only strengthened by America being the...
largest shareholder in the World Bank and by 61.7% of the votes in the IMF being held by only 14 Global North countries despite the institution being approximately 184 states strong.

In addition to this, all IMF and World Bank loans come with conditionality in the form of the Washington consensus, the brainchild of Thatcher and Reagan. It's a one-size-fits-all set of economic policies that follow an 'orthodox' model of economic development in turn eroding state sovereignty and causing 'munchie backlash.' The emphasis is on trade liberalisation, privatisation and cuts in public spending, however, very rarely has a positive impact on a country.

For example, when Senegal went to the IMF for help, inverting investment in their thriving groundnut industry, they saw a lack of demand, their debt spiralled out of control, leaving Senegal as one of the world's most indebted countries.

This, in its self, leads to more criticism as the IMF and World Bank fail to meet public opinion and be open to existing criticisms, still insisting on 'market fundamentalism' the blind naïve faith in the free market.
and comp disregarding any environmental or social impact that their projects may have. E.g. The World Bank inaugurated a dam-building project in India that resulted in the forced resettlement of people of the Narmada River valley between 1978 & 1993. Thus harming the quality of life of LDC residents and forcing a upon governments an economic form of Global homogenisation.

Finally many complain that both institutions simply aren't doing enough they failed to deal with the global economic downturn of 2007 and the World Bank arguably provides too little funding. E.g. Between 1996 & 1998 loan commitments dropped off by $2.4 billion, leaving China as the largest investor in the Global South.

In conclusion, although the IMF seems very stuck in its ways, the World Bank is becoming increasingly aware of environmental issues and is gaining recognition that one size policies do not fit all. Meaning that hopefully in the near future these criticisms will be resolved however for now the ideology of both institutions remains heavily scrutinised.
Q1

a. There have been various criticisms of the IMF & the WB, that have been made in recent years. The IMF & WB are both Bretton Woods organisations that offer loans to countries. The IMF offers short-term loans, compared to the low-interest long-term loans.

The firstly, the IMF is US-dominated. Currently the US has 18% of the vote, 13% of the vote against is required for a veto, which means the US are the only country to have a veto in the IMF. This shows the American dominance inside of the organisation, as they have the power to block anything proposed in the IMF. America’s power is seen when compared to all nations who collectively hold 35% of the vote, which puts into prospective even further the US’s dominance.

China is now being seen as a safer place to get loans from than the WB. This was seen in 2011, China lent global south $110 billion, compared to $100 billion lent by the WB. This is partly due the US having dominance over the WB & specifically the International Development Association (IDA) who give out long-term loans with little or no interest. However, these are only given out to allies of the US.

Finally, the WB is seen out as an outdated body in the 21st century. This is with what the World Bank was set up for, which was to
eastern Europe & EDCs after the collapse of communism. It is 25 years since the collapse of communism, and the world economies is as strong as ever, with the help of the EU. It's so astounding that Russia is now reemerging as a superpower.

In conclusion, there have been various criticisms made about the IMF & WB. Overall, the biggest criticism is with the WB, with China now lending more money to global south than the WB.
Analyse the divisions regarding human nature that exists between realists and liberals.

Realists differ from liberals over several key areas. These include human nature, the likelihood of war, and prospects for world government. Realists strongly believe that human nature is fixed towards being greedy and selfish, which has knock-on effects on the global stage where as liberals approach global politics with the belief that human nature is co-operative.

Firstly, their realists believe that human nature is fixed and possessed by nature. Machiavelli wrote that humans were “inhumane, arrogant, crafty and shifting.” This quote shows that humans are only interested in personal gain. This has a knock on effect to how states interact with each other. Realists would argue that leads to an “anarchical society” (Bull) where states only serve their “personal interests not permanent allies” especially as there is no higher power than the state. On the other hand, liberals believe that human nature is not fixed and that there is an empathy on moral values and ideals. Liberals would argue that humans are capable of reason which leads to a society of states for example the UN or to a lesser extent the EU.

Realists would disagree, due to humans being governed by instinct which gives weight to the idea of humans and therefore states, having a predisposition to aggressive acts. Hans Morgenthau said that states were always "preparing for, being in or recovering from a war" which tells us that human nature is aggressive. This is also demonstrated with the hard power still being the dominant force in global politics. On the other hand, liberals believe that war is not inevitable and that is only used for the sake of last resort. They would argue that...
Diplomacy is increasing, with countries like China opening more embassies and the rise of soft power lead by the Obama legislation. Neo-liberalists especially would argue that the increased complex interdependence has led to a more peaceful world, democracies don’t go to war with democracies and will instead resolve conflicts through discussion and negotiation through such organisations like the World Court. All of this was written.

Realists would argue that the fixed human nature means that all humans consider the pursuit of power to be primary. For this reason, states will never agree to be part of a World Government, which differs from our current global governance as World Government is supranational and, as all states view power as paramount, no state will give up power in order to subscribe to a World Government. This realist theory is known as Zero Sum as there is only a certain amount of power in the world, in order for a World Government to function states must give up their power. However, liberals would argue that humans beings are capable of development and therefore states are too. This means that liberals are far more optimistic about international co-operation, like the international efforts to save the environment as seen by the recent Paris treaty, and they view the strengthening of international law and the spread of trade as well as the successes of World Government as proof that world governance would one day happen.
Analyse the division regarding human nature that exists between realists and liberalists. (12 marks / 18 min)

Realists believe that human nature is greedy, as selfish, like Machiavelli’s book the Prince is based upon. Human nature is such that it leads to people only doing things for self gain and not kindness.

Liberalists believe that human nature is reasonable and compassionate, “turn your swords into ploughshares”. Liberalists also believe that war isn’t inevitable and will eventually stop. Realists believe in that war is inevitable as “power grows from the barrel of a gun”.

Realists also believe in the use of hard power, such as military “sticks” and economic “carrots”, as people will only do what either benefits them or preserves them. Liberalists believe that soft power should be used in order to persuade others into doing what is best, rather than bribing or threatening states.

Realists believe that state sovereignty is most important globally and that globalisation will cause conflict, through Huntington’s, “The Clash of Civilisations”. Liberalists believe that globalisation will bring peace as it will lead to an acceptance of cultures globally, over time.

Liberalists also believe that the spread of democracy will reduce global conflict as it will lead to an increase in global co-operation as people accept those similar in culture more than those different.
Evaluate the extent to which the Supreme Court is now an ‘Imperial Judiciary’

An Imperial Judiciary suggests an omnipotent judiciary with an untethered, unchecked influence over the rest of the US political system, namely the executive and legislative branches of government. Arguably, this description of the Supreme Court could be said to be true as the court uses judicial review to overrule or strike down Congressional and State legislation. Judicial Activism—both liberal and conservative—has expanded the power and influence of the court, and the judges are unelected and therefore unaccountable and are seldom impeached. However, it could be argued that the court is not an ‘imperial judiciary’ as the court relies on other branches of government to enforce their rulings, precedent and ‘stare decisis’ acts as a check on the court, and the number of cases taken by the court has declined. Overall however, the Supreme Court is now an ‘imperial judiciary’ as it has gone past it’s constitutional brief and has become quasi-legislative largely due to its activism.

Firstly, the Supreme Court could be seen as an ‘imperial judiciary’ as it can supersede or overturn State and Congressional legislation through judicial review. For instance, in Heller v DC 2008 the court overturned a Washington DC law that made gun owners to disassemble their weapons. The court said that this legislation was unconstitutional under the 2nd Amendment. This shows that the unelected and therefore unaccountable court can overrule the elected and mandated branches of US government. This shows the court to be imperial as there are no effective checks and balances which limit its judicial power, especially not Congress as the overturning of Supreme Court rulings requires large majorities which are very hard to achieve in the current era of hyper-partisanship. Overall therefore, the Supreme Court could be said to be an ‘imperial judiciary’ as it overturns legislation without being checked and balanced.

Secondly, judicial activism has increased since Earl Warren’s court of the 1960’s and 1970’s, therefore giving Supreme Court justices more power to make new inferences from the constitution thereby making the court more imperial. For instance, in Kennedy v Louisiana 2008 the court ruled that the 8th Amendments ‘cruel and unusual’ punishment clause extended to only giving the death penalty to convicted murderers. This example of liberal activism shows that the judges are no longer confined to the written content of the constitution as it’s now seen as acceptable for judges to find new, hidden meanings in the constitution. This is clear evidence that the court is an ‘imperial’ judiciary as it’s perpetually creating more power for itself through its activism and inferences. Overall, therefore, the Supreme Court is an imperial judiciary as the court’s activism suggests an infinite power of inference held by the judges who appear to be able to manipulate the wording of the constitution to suit many circumstances – a significant power.

Thirdly, the court could be seen as ‘imperial’ as judges aren’t elected and are therefore life members of the court. This means they are unaccountable, therefore suggesting imperialism as their powers, again, appears to be unstoppable and immune to public opinion. For example the 2008 Kennedy v Louisiana ruling was widely condemned by the public but Justice Scalia concluded “the views of the American people were irrelevant.” Furthermore, the only way Judges can be removed from the court is through impeachment, but this seldom happens as the last justice to be impeached was Samuel Chase in 1809. This lack of threat of impeachment allows judges to act without fear of repercussion, thus further proving their lack of accountability. This therefore suggests that the court is an imperial judiciary as the only level of accountability the court has is ineffective as
impeachments are very rare and so judges have a free reign to make decisions without any real consequences.

However, arguably the Supreme Court is not an ‘imperial judiciary’ as, firstly, the court relies on other branches of government to enforce their rulings. For example, in Brown v Board of Education 1954 the court ruled that segregation in education was not constitutional. However, black students in Little Rock in the State of Arkansas were denied entry to a white school by the Governor and white protestors, and so the Court had to rely on the National Guard to ensure the entry of the students in order to carry out their ruling. Therefore the court relied on elected and mandated bodies such as Congress to implement their decisions and so these elected branches have a choice over enforcement. Therefore the court is less imperial as its power is limited due to its lack of enforcement power for its rulings and its reliance on the other branches of government for enforcement.

Secondly, precedent and the courts respect for ‘stare decisis’ also acts as a limit to the power of the court and therefore undermines the idea of an ‘imperial judiciary’. Justices such as Sandra Day O’Connor have a high respect for precedent and so will not go against previous decisions. This acts as a de facto check on the justices as it restricts that power to infer. This heightened respect for precedent is likely to continue with Trump’s nomination of Neil Gorsuch, a conservative strict constructionist who is therefore likely to be less activist in terms of overturning precedents than, for instance, the liberal justice Elena Kagan. So, this making of future decisions by previous case law suggests that judges are not omnipotent and do not have infinite power in American government as the precedents act as a check and restraint on the decisions of the judges. Overall, therefore, the Supreme Court is less imperial as precedent and ‘stare decisis’ restricts the justices power to infer.

Thirdly, there has been a decline in the number of cases taken on by the court in recent years in the Roberts era. For instance in the 1960’s and 1970’s the courts of Earl Warren and Warren Burger were used to taking up to 200 cases per year whereas the current Roberts Court workload is around 70-75. This reduction in decisions inevitably reduces the influence of the court on the executive and legislative branches of the government as less legislation and decisions are made under a backdrop of a court ruling. This therefore suggests that the power of the court is in fact diminishing especially as the court cannot be proactive in the cases it considers as cases have to be brought to it. This reduction in the workload of the court has coincided with a fall in arguably more important and controversial cases. The highly activist courts of the 1960’s and 1970’s gave landmark decisions such as Roe v Wade in 1973 which legalised abortion. The Court now arguably makes less critical decisions and so could be said to have lost even more influence. Overall, therefore, the Supreme Court should not be seen as an ‘Imperial Judiciary’ as the number of cases it takes and the significance of these cases has declined, thus suggesting a loss of power and therefore lack of imperialism.

To conclude, the Supreme Court arguably is an imperial judiciary as it overturns state and federal legislation such as DC V Heller plus it’s activism, both left and right, allows the justices to wield new power through inferences, and finally judges are never removed from the court and are therefore unaccountable. However there are also arguments against an ‘imperial judiciary’ such as restriction of precedent. Overall, however, the court is now an ‘imperial judiciary’ as the justices do now operate beyond the brief given to them by the founding fathers as they make new inferences and
find new meanings in the constitution and thereby extend their power without proper checks and balances and with few consequences.
An imperial judiciary suggests an omnipotent judiciary with unmitigated, unchecked influence over the rest of the US political system, namely the executive and legislative branches of government. Arguably, this description of the Supreme Court could be said to be true as the Court uses judicial review to abrogate or strike down congressional or state legislation, judicial activism - both liberal and conservative - has expanded the power and influence of the Court, and judges are elected and hence accountable and are often impeached. However, the Court could be argued that the Court is not an 'imperial judiciary,' as the Court relies on other branches of government to enforce its rulings, precedent and stare decisis act as a check on the Court, and the number of cases taken on by the Court has declined. Overall, however, the Supreme Court is now an 'imperial judiciary' as it has gained past its constitutional bounds and has become quasi-legislative largely due to its activism.

Firstly, the Supreme Court could be seen as an 'imperial judiciary' as it can overrule executive, legislative, and congressional legislation through judicial review. For instance, in Heller vs. District of Columbia 2008, the Court examined a Washington, DC law that made it illegal to possess guns in the home, and the Court said this legislation was unconstitutional under the 2nd Amendment. This shows that the Court can override elected and accountable branches of government. This shows that the Court to be more powerful than ever are no effective checks and balances, which limit its judicial power, especially as Congress is the only body of the Supreme Court rulings. This major role and unchecked very hard decisions in the current era of hyper-partisanship until recently, the Supreme Court could be said to be an 'imperial judiciary' as it controls legislation without being checked and balanced.

Secondly, judicial activism has increased, such as in Brown vs. Board of Education of 1954 and 1955. Therefore, giving the Supreme Court more power to make new decisions from the Constitution, this case involved the use of the emergency, for instance, in Ex parte Yarbrough vs. Louisiana 2008, the Court ruled that the Sixth Amendment's 'cruel and unusual'
Clause extended to only giving the death penalty to convicted murderers.

This example of judicial activism shows that the judges are no longer content to follow the written text of the Constitution, as it is now seen as acceptable for judges to find new, hidden meanings in the Constitution. This is clear evidence that the Court is an "imperial" judiciary, as it is perpetually creating new power for itself through its activism and interpretations. However, the Supreme Court is arguably an "imperial" judiciary as the Court's activism suggests an indefinite power of difference held by the judges, who appear to be able to manipulate the wording of the Constitution to suit many circumstances.

Initially, the Court could be seen as "imperial" as judges aren't elected and are therefore the members of the Court. This means they are accountable, therefore suggesting no imperialism as their powers seem unending. Again, it appears to be unstoppable and immune to public opinion, for example in 2008 Kennedy vs. Louisiana policy was widely condemned by the public, but "justice" Scalia claimed "the views of the American people were irrelevant". Furthermore, the only way judges can be removed from the Court is through impeachment, but this seldom happens as the last instance to be impeached was Samuel Chase in 1804. This lack of threat to impeachment allows judges to act without fear of repercussions, thus further proving their lack of accountability. This therefore suggests that the Court is an "imperial" judiciary as the only level of accountability that the Court has is ineffective as impeachment is very rare, and so judges have a free reign to make decisions without any real consequences.

However, arguably the Supreme Court is not an "imperial" judiciary, as firstly, the Court relies on other branches of government to enforce their rulings. For example, in Brown vs. Board of Education 1954, the Court ruled that segregation in education was no constitutional. However, Black students in Little Rock in the state of Arkansas were denied entry to a white school by the Governor and White protesters, and so the Court had to rely on the National Guard to ensure the entry of the students in order to carry out their ruling. Therefore, the Court's
on elected and mandated officials such as Congress, to implement their decisions and so these elected branches have a choice over enforcement. Therefore, the court is less imperial as its power is limited due to its lack of enforcement power for its rulings and its reliance on the other branches of government for enforcement.

Secondly, precedent and the courts respect for stare decisis also acts as a check on the court's power and therefore undermines the idea of an "imperial judiciary." Justices such as Sandra Day O'Connor have a high respect for precedent and so will not go against previous decisions. This acts as a de facto check on the justices as it restricts their power to infer and therefore restricts their power to change the law. This heightened respect for precedents is likely to continue. Justice Antonin Scalia, as he is a conservative, and is therefore likely to be less activist in terms of overturning precedents. Thirdly, for instance, the liberal Justice Breyer suggested that judges aren't omnipotent and don't have absolute power in the American government as precedents act as a check and restraint on the decisions of the justices. Overall, therefore, the Supreme Court is less imperial as precedent and stare decisis restricts the justices' power to infer.

Thirdly, there has been a decline in the number of cases taken on by the Court. In recent years, for instance in the 1960s the Warren Court was used to taking nearly 250 cases per year whereas the current Roberts Court is used to about 70-75 cases per year. This reduction in decisions inevitably reduces the influence of the court on the executive and legislative branches of the government as less legislation and decisions are made under the legal backdrop of a court ruling. This therefore suggests that the power of the court is in fact diminishing, especially as the Court cannot be proactive in the cases it runs as cases have to be brought to the Court. This reduction in cases has also coincided with a fall in arguably more important cases. The highly activist courts of the 1960s and 1970s gave landmark decisions such as Roe v. Wade in 1973, which legalized abortion. The Court now arguably makes less critical decisions and so could be said to have lost even more influence. Overall, therefore, the Supreme
Court should not be seen as an 'imperial judiciary', as the number of cases it takes and the significance of these cases has declined, thus suggesting a loss of power and therefore loss of importance.

To conclude, the Supreme Court arguably is an 'imperial judiciary' as it oversees state and federal legislation, such as in Heller vs. D.C., plus its activism allows the justices to wield new power through differences, and finally, judges are never removed from the Court and are therefore unaccountable. However, there are also arguments against an 'imperial judiciary', such as the restriction of precedent. Overall, however, the Court is now an 'imperial judiciary' as the justices do now operate past the boundaries given to them by the founding fathers as they make new influence and find new meanings in the constitution and thereby extend their power without proper checks and balances and no consequences.
Evaluate the extent to which the Supreme Court is now on 'Imperial Judiciary'.

When the Supreme Court was first created, Alexander Hamilton, one of the founding fathers of the United States, stated: "Of the three powers, the judiciary is next to useless." However, following the creation of the Supreme Court of Judicial Review, being set in 1807, the Supreme Court's power, significance, and influence on American society have grown exponentially to result in several landmark cases being decided within the walls of the judiciary.

Firstly, a key factor which can be used to prove that an 'Imperial Judiciary' has emerged is the theory of Judicial Review. Judicial Review is the ability to strike down by the Supreme Court to examine and decide if a statute, treaty, or executive action is regular. In order to exist the US Constitution. Thus, in the landmark case of Marbury v. Madison in 1803, which saw James Madison's refusal to deliver Marbury's commission, the said "the Constitution is the supreme law of the land..." Since then, Judicial Review has served to strike down hundreds of cases and now, stands as a significant check on the powers of the other two branches of government.

Secondly, the justices on the Supreme Court are, fundamentally, unaccountable, are placed on the court following a President's nomination and subsequent Senate approval.
Once accepted on the court, the justice is there for life, they cannot be voted off the court, except under impeachment, which has never been done, even with an impeached judge, is highly unlikely. Therefore a justice can only be removed if the President who appointed them, such as Justice Earl Warren by Eisenhower, Warren led the court through its most liberal period ever, engineering cases such as Roe v. Wade for example.

Eisenhower then famously remarked that Warren was "the biggest damned fool mistake I ever made." Thus, although usually seen as the legacy of the President, a Justice may do relatively as they please, with little chance of being removed.

Finally, once a Supreme Court decision has been made, it is very difficult for the elected branches of government to overrule. IV. Once a precedent is set, Congress are required to make a Constitutional amendment in order to overturn a Supreme Court precedent. Although the Constitution has been amended 27 times, very few if any were to overturn a court judgment, and all were done over 150 years ago. Therefore, although it may seem significant that Congress may overturn a judgement, it rarely if ever happens, so is relatively insignificant in reality, just in their power of impeachment.

On the other hand, it can be said that the
Supreme Court is becoming less imperial in the recent years under Roberts. One way this can be proven is through the number of cases taken. The Roberts Court took 89 cases in its whole 2015 term, when compared to Earl Warren handling hundreds each year, it is clear that there has been a reemergence of judicial paranoia relatively, perhaps aligned to the strict constructionist viewpoint of leaving the big unshuffled and decision to elected politicians.

Furthermore, the number of significant landmark cases has dropped significantly since the era of Warren and the early Burger Courts, who arguably seemed willing to question the judgment of the elected governor. The Roberts court, on the other hand, has taken its cases, such as Obergefell v. Hodges, which legalized same-sex marriage and legalizing it nationally. However, the clear decline in such cases may show the Court to be less powerful than before, even therefore less imperial, as the Court has been visibly less influential than previous Courts.

Finally, the strict constructionist value of Stone-Decisions, the theory of 'let the previous decision stand, no stand to reduce the power, of them at least of those who follow the theory. One significant case of which this ideal became shoved to be
important way that of Sandra Day O'Connor, who was a firm believer of precedent, regardless of whom may have set it. One such case was 
Stanley v. Georgia in which O'Connor followed the precedent set in Roe v. Wade to recognize a basic right to privacy. Despite having fundamentally contentious views, the 
justices are bound, theoretically, to follow
previously Court decisions, so even as an unconstitutional check on Supreme Court power, so that may 
prove a lack of clear precedent, as the 
justices cannot have taken freedom to act as 
they please.

To conclude, although it is very valid to say 
there has been a re evaluation in Imperial actions 
taken by the court, this does not take away from 
the fact that the court still does not in every 
time, even imperial way. With the use of Judicial 
review, Supreme Court justices can question the 
judgments of elected politicians in Congress, 
while keeping little accountability for themselves. 
Furthermore, it is relatively difficult for the 
politicians to take action against the Court, 
as the two methods: impeachment or constitutional 
mandated, both very rare to never occur.
Evaluate the extent to which Congressional oversight of the President is ineffective

A key function of Congress is the scrutiny of the executive. Congressional oversight of the President can vary in effectiveness depending on whether the same party controls both the executive and the legislative branches (this is united government) or whether the branches are controlled by different parties (divided government). This leads to the idea that congressional oversight of the President can be ineffective based on the different view parties take, who controls the White House and who controls Congress. A summary from Congress watcher Gary Bass 'I don't know if Congress is really about governing anymore. It seems to be about gotcha politics' demonstrates how throughout time, Congress has lacked the oversight on the President and acted more like a lapdog than a watchdog.

Congress has been criticised for not being effective in scrutiny with Presidents such as Clinton. In his first two years, Congress was Democrat controlled and consequently exercised limited oversight of his administration because whenever the President's own party is controlling Congress, they are reluctant to embarrass the president with stringent oversight and acts more like a lapdog than a watchdog but in times of divided government (such as Republican control of Congress in 1995), the 'opposition party' seeks to call the president to account thus acting to be effective in congressional oversight (leading to the Senate rejecting Clinton's Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty). Therefore, congressional oversight is dependent on party control and is consequently often reactive. This is clearly shown in Obama's presidency, whereby his manifesto to close Guantanamo Bay was not achieved due to the intense times of hyper partisanship as Republicans were not willing to see the constitution to expand to the scope of protecting suspected terrorist rights in Guantanamo Bay. This shows how in major hyper partisan times, Congress often acts within party ideology as opposed to exercising its legitimate function of presidential oversight. In times of unified government there is often reduced scrutiny of the President, increasing their power, yet in times of divided government, Presidents often rely on more imperial powers to bypass Congress, consequently in both cases, Congress fails to appropriately check the President and they cannot effectively act as a check or balance on Presidential power whatever the political landscape of the time and the mechanisms in place fail.

Furthermore, 'on foreign and national security, Congress has largely abandoned the oversight process' (Ornstein and Mann). Congress is the only branch to have the enumerated power to declare war, yet the President still has the enumerated power of Commander in Chief which has led to Congress having limited powers to oversee the President. This is because during times of national emergency, Congress aim for high approval ratings with the public and therefore leave much responsibility with the President. This leads to the idea that Congress is ineffective in reigning the President in during times of crisis which questions how far the President is allow to go and does not conform to the intention of the Founding Fathers (who strove for limited government and separate institutions). On the contrary, by controlling the budget, Congress has the ability to defund wars and retain some control over foreign policy. This was shown when in 1973, Congress stopped funding the Vietnam war as it has the 'power of the purse'. This has prevented unilateral action from the President and is clear evidence that the actions of the President can have huge impacts on what happens in both the country and abroad.

It would be wrong to assume that Congress is completely ineffective as it still grants considerable checks to Congress. Congress has proven it is capable of thwarting President's demands with constitutional checks – where Presidents have tried to circumvents them they have suffered in the media. This is shown in Trump's determination to build a border ('wall') to stop Mexican people entering the USA but was met with heavy media backlash and was seen as too expensive as well as unrealistic. This consequently reduces his power and shows Congress as effective in how they check
presidential power and how they also use mechanisms such as the media to aid their oversight function. On the contrary, Congress's legislative power can be overturned by a presidential veto. This is shown when Bush vetoed Stem Cell Research Veto in 2006 that would have allowed federal funding for stem-cell research. Although the presidential veto is rarely exercised, it still holds significant power in ensuring an effective check on Congressional legislation because it demonstrates how legislation is designed to benefit 'we the people' and if there is not some form of compromise between the branches then legislation will never be passed. This shows a limit to the oversight function of Congress as presidents possess this action which is capable of blocking a bill entirely. The Constitution allows a President to overturn Congress even if they have a more recent mandate and yet Congress has displayed only a minimal ability to use the veto override. This shows therefore, weaknesses in the exercise of their power, shows that the President is more powerful and that Congress power is restricted and cannot be wholly effective. Congress could react to the presidential veto with an override (as shown when Congress overruled Obama's veto to let victims' families sue Saudi Arabia over 9/11 attacks) but this enumerated power requires the President to act first. This power restricts the ability of Congress to act proactively therefore this has allowed the President to dominate so that the oversight is ineffective as the balance of power still remains with the President and Congress is not in control.

Overall, Congress has three principle functions of representation, oversight and legislation. They aim to address constituency concerns and interests within legislation and is effective in ensuring the right legislation is passed to benefit the majority. However, over time the key function of oversight has proven ineffective as a result of the President in power. During divided government, there is less scrutiny of the executive as members aim to not embarrass the party leader yet during times of divided government, hyper partisanship is exacerbated as members act within their political ideological lines and aim to heavily scrutinise the opposition in power. Therefore, the idea of Congress's effectiveness to oversight depends upon the composition of Congress itself but even through times of united government, Congress still has low turnout approval with only 28%. This begs the question of whether it is more important to criticise Congress for not being effective in overseeing the executive or whether Congress should work to improve their approval rating which is what the Founding Fathers intended and is the principle of democracy.
Evaluate the extent by which Congressional oversight of the President is Effective (30 Marks)

The term 'Congressional oversight' by definition refers to the process of the United States of Congress monitoring and supervising the policy implementation of the executive. This process was deemed by the founding fathers as a method with which to place checks and balances on the presidency and his executive so that a President could not simply act and legislate as he chooses at the expense of the American people.

Within Obama's presidency, he had met significant checks at the hands of Congress and so throughout this essay it shall be debated the extent by which Congressional oversight has remained effective using this (as well as other presidencies) as sources and references.

Firstly, one way that Congressional oversight could be suggested to be effective is the way in which it has a large control over a President in the weaker half of his term. The 'weaker half' of a President's term starts at the time before the election of another President and is the point at which Congress has significant control over any potential legislation that the President may put forward. Presidents such as Bush and Obama have been labelled as 'lame ducks' as they ended their 8 year terms and Obama in particular faced achieving his agenda were difficult, for example, in the run up to the vote for the the 'President-elect Trump' in September 2016, the House
of Representatives voted 244 - 174 to block Obama’s efforts to release any more prisoners from Guantanamo. This is representative of not just a showdown between Obama and Congress following his 8 year attempt to close the prison, but also the fact that the Republicans no longer feel that he had the mandate to propose such prominent bills with an upcoming election. In this way it could be put forth that Congress has a very influential oversight as essentially they are capable of determining as and when a President retains the legitimacy to create policy and make laws by maximising public opinion against them.

Secondly, another way that congressional oversight could be suggested to be effective is the way in which they control the budget. This power of the purse means that Congress can exert effective control of the actions of the executive and thus the President by withholding funding. This power is laid down within Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution and could be considered Congress maintaining over the executive. A prominent example of Congress using this power is the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, whereby they eliminated military funding to the government of South Vietnam, thereby ending the Vietnam War. Though a dated example, it nonetheless stands as an incredibly important one in demonstrating how influential and controlling Congress can be. This impact our foreign and domestic affairs can be further seen in Congressional opposition to the Iraq War and it’s consequential budget in 2007, another demonstration of the way that Congress can act to prevent unilateral action on behalf of a President.
A third way that Congressional oversight of the president is effective is the way that they control the legislative process by deciding which presidential policies should be passed into law. This complete override of the president can be seen most notably in the overturning of executive actions and executive orders. This has been seen thus far within the Trump presidency, where many of his recent Executive Orders (such as those attempting to abolish Obamacare, referring to abortion, and a potential ban on Muslims entering the country) have failed to avoid debate and opposition and weight from Congress due to the immense political weight that they carry. This conveys the idea that though Trump may seek to "hit the ground running" by getting as much done as he can with respect to policy, he simply cannot avoid the obstacle that Congress, (though primarily Republican and belonging to his party) will create. Overall, this could be considered an issue for all presidents; Congressional power to intervene ultimately stands as a method of oversight that can curb presidential actions effectively.

However, it should be remembered that there are ways in which Congressional oversight of the president isn't effective, for example, the way their rulings can be overturned by a Presidential veto. Though Congress maintains the power to override this veto (the way they did following a W. Bill Obama vetoed in 2016 that led families see Saudi Arabia), realistically, Congress do not override the President often. This weakness in exercising their power can be seen consistently across Presidencies. For example, both George W. Bush and Barack Obama both used 12 regular vetoes, with only 4 and 1 of these vetoes overridden respectively. For example in 2016, Obama vetoed the Justice Presidential Allowance Modernization Act and the fact that Obama was allowed to stand alone in stopping wage fluctuations to the presidential pension demonstrates the power he holds are far greater than Congress.
Though arguably Congress maintained the more recent modus of Obama could still act against them in his an executive interest denying the check and this method of oversight that was supposed to allow as ineffective.

Another way in which Congressional oversight could be suggested to be ineffective with respect to checking the president is the dominance that the president maintains over foreign policy. In many ways, though Congress does control the war budget, the president can still circumvent their oversight in order to act in the interest of the executive. This manipulation as the vagueness of Article II can be seen across many presidencies, particularly within those of Johnson, Bush and Obama. In reference to Obama, one might definitely put forth that within his presidency, he sidelined Congress during dealing with Iraq and Afghanistan, using drone strikes as a way to avoid Congressional rulings or employing ground troops. By using such strategies by air, Obama could justify his actions and argue that the Constitution didn’t expressly prohibit them. Overall, it would seem that Congress simply did not have the power to limit presidential dominance in matters abroad. In order for oversight in this area to be effective it must be seriously reviewed, perhaps by placing much stricter regulations on what a President can do at war in this modern (and much more technologically advanced) era.

In conclusion, I would venture that although Congress can sometimes fail to utilise the checks it has over the President, for example in relation to vetoes and foreign power, Congressional oversight on the whole is effective. Ultimately, they still stop the president from acting as a dictator and imposing policies without checks, which is what the founding fathers intended.