

U.S. Government SLO/Final Exam Review Text 4

SSCG 10a; How do the specific rules for debate for the House and Senate in Congress differ?

In the House and Senate all the real work of creating a bill that could become a law is done in committee. Committees investigate, debate, and eventually vote on a proposed bill. There are five different types of committees; A **Standing Committee** is a permanent committee of which there are 22 in the House and 16 in the Senate. A **sub-Committee** is a smaller, specialized part of a Standing Committee. A **Select Committee** is a temporary committee that has been created to deal with a new topic. A **Joint Committee** consists of members of the House and the Senate. The final committee is a Conference Committee which consists of members of both the House and the Senate, but only meet to reconcile (make the same) similar bills that have passed both the House and the Senate.

GSSCG 10b What is the leadership organization of the House and Senate in Congress?

The Constitution specifies certain leadership positions in the House and Senate. The leader of the House, chosen by the majority party is called the **Speaker of the House**. The Leader of the Senate is called the **President of the Senate** and is the Vice-President of the United States. While the Speaker is a full time member of the House, with equal powers as any other member, he also controls the calendars deciding when events in the House will take place. The President of the Senate (VP) is not a full member of the Senate and cannot debate an issue or vote on issue, unless a vote by the Senate ends in a tie. If the duties of the Vice President keep him from performing his duties as President of the Senate, the constitution calls for a member to step in and be the **President Pro-Tempore** and runs the Senate. There are additional members of the House and Senate who fill leadership positions, The **Majority Leaders** of the House and Senate runs their political parties and their members. Additional the Senate Majority leader is the actual power in the Senate, like the Speaker of the House the **Senate Majority Leader** controls the calendars of events. In support of the Majority Leaders are the Whips, these members control the membership, find out what the membership wants and informs them of what the leadership wants. The **minority-party members** of the House and Senate also have a leadership, similar to the majority called the Minority Leader-House and Senate, and Minority Whips. All of whom serve the same functions of the majority leaders, but for the minority party

GSSCG 11a What is a lobbyist and what role do they play in influencing governmental policy?

A **lobbyist** is a paid representative of an individual or group, who represents the individual or group and tries to influence elected or appointed officials on their behalf, to pass legislation, or enact regulations that are favorable to that individual or group.

GSSCG 11c What methods are used by Special Interest Groups to influence governmental policy?

A **Special Interest Group** is a group of people with common goals organized over a specific interest that all the members share and seek to influence policy and hope to achieve the goals of the group. Special Interest groups can be formed to represent business groups, labor organizations, agricultural interest, professional associations, environmental issues, government groups, civil rights, and foreign governments. Special interest groups use a variety of methods to influence government, using media, letter writing, public demonstrations, litigation and direct-action, among many ways. A **grass-roots campaign** is one that is organized from the lowest level of political structure, usually called the local level, and consists of ordinary people organizing and idea up to the government. A **Political Action Committee (PAC)** is an organization that seeks to support the financial needs of political candidates seeking office. It can raise unlimited amounts of money some of which they can directly donate, while some they can use to indirectly support their candidate. Because of recent Supreme Court decisions and because PACs are ideological in nature, they cannot be regulated as it may deny their right to free speech.

GSSCG 12 What are the roles of the Executive Branch?; (ie; Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, chief executive, chief agenda setter, representative of the nation, chief of state, foreign policy leader, and party leader.

The President of the United States fills many roles within his official duties and powers among them are: **Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces**; makes the President the highest ranking individual for the Armed Forces of the US, and as such makes him the only person who can send US Forces into conflicts. **Chief Executive**; The Constitution separates power into three branches of government, *legislative*, *executive*, and *judicial*. All other government organizations created outside of the legislative and judicial branches are part of the executive branch. The Constitution designates the President as the Chief Executive, put the responsibility of the operation of all these other governmental organizations under his control. While a president does not directly run these, departments, agencies, or regulatory commissions, he does select the person to run them (with Senate approval) and they must go through him for budget requests. **Chief Agenda Setter**; The president is the only nationally elected official and as a result, he has a tremendous impact on the policy agenda, or what the government is trying to do. The President can impact *legislation*, the action or process of making laws, in several ways. Initially he prepares the budget for the entire executive branch, this tells the Congress how much money and additionally powers may be needed to carry out previous laws, passed by Congress. Since Congress is the legislative branch, all actions by Congress requires them to develop a bill. They know that the president will have to approve (sign it), or it will not become a law, this gives the President much power over what laws they will pass. Finally the president has tremendous power in drawing listeners to his speeches and announcements. His constitutionally required *State of the Union* address often results in citizens contact the Congress to follow what the President spoke of. **Representative of the Nation**; As the only nationally elected official in the country results in the president being recognized as the *Chief of State*. As *Chief of State* or the *representative of the nation*, the president gets to represent the nation in a variety of activities, such as handing out national awards, attending ceremonial functions to include foreign events, and even sporting events. **Foreign Policy Leader**; Since the president has the powers to make treaties and agreements with foreign nations, this makes him the *Chief Diplomat* of the nation. The President can deal directly with foreign nations and leaders, appoints ambassadors and other representative, and write treaties, which are formal agreements between the U.S. and another country(ies) that have the force of law (when passed by the Senate) and will last beyond his presidency, and *executive agreements* which also is a formal agreement between the US and foreign country(ies) that has the force of law for as long as he and the foreign executive agree to it. **Party Leader**; Since the president has received more votes for office than any other elected official, he is usually accepted by his political party as it's leader. As the party leader, he can appoint the national party officials and set the agenda of the party, the *platform*, of the basic ideals for what the party believes in. He can also raise huge amounts of money for the party and its other candidates.

GSSCG 13a What are the formal and informal qualifications for the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches?

The **Formal Qualifications** for office differ among the different branches of government. The Constitution requires for a member of the *House of Representatives* is "Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen." For *Senate* "Age of thirty Years, and nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen. For *President* a natural born Citizen, Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States. The **Unwritten Qualifications**, or informal Qualifications, for President are; Experience in government, at the state or national level; Access to large amounts of money to pay for a presidential campaign. Have moderate positions on the major issues of the day and the ability to adapt, grow and change as a person

U.S. Government SLO/Final Exam; Review Activity 4

Directions; Using your SLO/Final Review Text Sheet, number and respond to the following in complete sentences, rewriting the question as part of the response. You can complete the sentences on the back or on an attached separate sheet of paper. All 6 review activities will be in stapled in order to the cover instructions sheet and turned in on Final Exam test day, for a summative grade.

1. What are the Congressional Committees, how are they used, how important are they to the legislative process? (SSCG 10)
2. What is the role of Congressional Committees and Sub Committees in Congress? (SSCG 10)
3. What is a lobbyists, what do they do? (SSCG 11)
4. Who can use a lobbyist? (SSCG 11)
5. What is the purpose of a Special Interest Group? (SSCG 11)
6. What are the various types of Special Interest Groups? Give examples. (SSCG 11)
7. What does a “grassroots” campaign refer to? (SSCG 11)
8. What is the purpose of a Political Action Committee? (SSCG 11)
9. What are the 7 roles of the president and what do they require? (SSCG 12)
10. What roles does the president play in the legislative process? (SSCG 12)
11. What are the formal qualifications to be president? (SSCG 13)
12. What are the unwritten qualifications for a president? (SSCG 13)