

Unit #4: Institutions—Congress

AP US Government & Politics

Mr. Coia

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

“Congress is the great commanding theater of this nation. It is the place where laws are made.” --Thomas Jefferson

Thurs 1/4

- New Unit Guide
- Ask 3-5 questions about things you know that you need to know about Congress
- DVD: [The Congress clip 1](#) (25 min)
- Small group discussion on viewing notes
- DVD: [The Congress clip 2](#) (25 min)
- Discuss connection of film and text
- Read AG 17.270 (What Should I Have Learned? section)

HW: AG, 17.234-245; index cards

Mon 1/8

- **Notebook check**
- Reading Quiz 17.234-245
- Introduction to Congress
- Lecture/Discussion topic: Overview of Congress

HW: AG, 17.245-256; index cards

Wed 1/10

- Reading Quiz 17.245-256
- **Index cards must be completed**
- Lecture/Discussion topic: Leadership in Congress; Powers of Congress/ Committee System
- Read: [The Nuclear Option in Senate](#)

HW: AG, 17.256-270

Fri 1/12

- Reading Quiz 17.256-270
- Watch: [“Congress Forgets how to make a law”](#)
- Watch: [“I’m Just a Bill”](#) What does this get right? What is missing?
- Lecture/Discussion topic: How a bill becomes a law
- In pairs, write a layman’s guide to how a bill becomes a law. What are the 10 essential steps needed?

Wed 1/17

- Create *something* creative to illustrate your knowledge of how a bill becomes a law. No outline. No flowchart. No handwriting. No just-the-usual-type-of-stuff project.

HW: Finish your *something*

Fri 1/19

- Bill to Law presentations
- Responding to your 3-5 questions from first class of unit
- Practice Gov MC test

Wed 1/24

- Practice FRQ
- *Choose Your Own Adventure* in Reviewing this semester
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B1: Wed 1/24

- **Review Session**
- **Semester 1 Exam: ALL UNITS**
 - 60 AP-style MC Questions
 - Two FRQs

B3: Thurs 1/25

- **Review Session**
 - **Semester 1 Exam: ALL UNITS**
 - 60 AP-style MC Questions
 - Two FRQs
-

Tues 1/30

Begin unit 4b-Institutions: The Presidency

Institutions: (35-45% of AP Test)

The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts

The functions these institutions perform and do not perform, as well as the powers that they do and do not possess, are important. It is necessary for students to understand that power balances and relationships between these institutions may evolve gradually or change dramatically as a result of crises. Students are also expected to understand ties between the various branches of national government and political parties, interest groups, the media, and state and local governments. For example, a study of the conflicting interests and powers of the President and Congress may help explain recent and repeated struggles to adopt a national budget.

At minimum, students must know

- The major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power
- Relationships among these four institutions, and varying balances of power

Notebook and Supply Check

You'll need the following for our notebook check **Mon 1/8**. Remember, this is the first, and we'll add to this throughout the year to provide you with an orderly notebook. Therefore, you need ALL the pieces to receive credit. No partial credit offered on this.

You need ***three*** tabs with the following:

GOV Handouts:

- *Unit Guide 4*
- *Unit Guide 3*
- *Conservative/Liberal Chart*
- *Understanding the Amendments (unit guide 1, p.9-10)*
- *Federalist Papers #10, 51 (unit 1, p. 11-13)*
- *Key Terms: Constitutional Underpinnings (unit 1, p. 5-6)*
- *Key Terms: Constitutional Clauses (unit 1, p. 7-8)*
- *Key Terms: Political Beliefs/Political Behaviors (unit 2, p. 3-4)*
- *Key Terms: Interest Groups/Public Policy (unit 3, p. 3-4)*
- *AP GOV Syllabus*
- *Class Rules sheet, initialed*

GOV Classwork:

Notes from lectures, presentations, mini-lessons. Remember you should be taking notes each class period. You will also have at least 25 sheets of loose-leaf paper in your binder, and your pens, pencils, highlighter, etc.

GOV Outlines:

Unit 1: Constitutional Underpinnings outlines (this includes all of your EIGHT outlines put in order with a cover page stapled to the top). This will help you review for semester tests and the AP exam in May. [If you are using a notebook, put that in this place for this check.]

Unit 2: Political Beliefs/Political Behaviors (this includes all of your SEVEN outlines put in order with a cover page stapled to the top). This will help you review for semester tests and the AP exam in May. [If you are using a notebook, put that in this place for this check.]

Unit 3: Interest Groups/Public Policy (this includes all FOUR outlines put in order with a cover page stapled on top).

KEY TERMS: INSTITUTIONS--CONGRESS

1. **Appropriation:** money that Congress has allocated to be spent.
2. **Appropriations Committee:** congressional committee that deals with federal spending.
3. **Casework:** personal work done by a member of Congress for his constituents.
4. **Closed rule:** Rules Committee rule that bans amendments to a bill.
5. **Cloture:** Senate motion to end a filibuster that requires a 3/5 vote.
6. **Conference committee:** works out a compromise between differing House-Senate versions of a bill.
7. **Constituents:** the people who are represented by elected officials.
8. **Discharge petition:** a motion to force a bill to the House floor that has been bottled up in committee.
9. **Filibuster:** nonstop Senate debate that prevents a bill from coming to a vote.
10. **Finance Committee:** Senate committee that handles tax bills.
11. **Franking privilege:** allows members of Congress to send mail postage free.
12. **Gerrymandering:** redrawing district lines to favor one party at the expense of the other.
13. **Hold:** Senate maneuver that allows a Senator to stop or delay consideration of a bill or presidential appointment.
14. **Impeachment:** House action that formally charges an official with wrongdoing. Conviction requires 2/3 vote from the Senate.
15. **Legislative oversight:** ongoing process of congressional monitoring of the executive branch to ensure that the latter complies with the law.
16. **Legislative veto:** process in which Congress overturned rules and regulations proposed by executive branch agencies. Struck down in 1983.
17. **Logrolling:** when two members of Congress agree to vote for each other's bill.
18. **Mark up:** committee action to amend a proposed bill.
19. **Open rule:** House Rules Committee rule that allows amendments to a bill.
20. **Pocket veto:** presidential killing of a bill by inaction after Congress adjourns.
21. **Pork barrel:** wasteful congressional spending, e.g. funding for a Lawrence Welk museum in North Dakota.
22. **Quorum:** minimum number of members needed for the House or Senate to meet.
23. **Reapportionment:** reallocation of House seats to the states on the basis of changes in state populations, as determined by the census.
24. **Redistricting:** redrawing of congressional district boundaries by the party in power of the state legislature.
25. **Rider:** amendment to a bill that has little to do with that bill. Also known as a **nongermane amendment**.
26. **Rules Committee:** the "traffic cop" of the House that sets the legislative calendar and issues rules for debate on a bill.
27. **Seniority system:** tradition in which the Senator from the majority party with the most years of service on a committee becomes the chairman of that committee.
28. **Standing committees:** the permanent congressional committees that handle legislation.
29. **Sunset laws:** laws that automatically expire after a given time.
30. **Ways and Means Committee:** House committee that handles tax bills.

Name: _____ Date: _____

DVD Viewing Guide for *The Congress* by Ken Burns

AP US Government & Politics

Before we begin our study of Congress, ask 3-5 questions that you know that you need to know about this institution.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

For each DVD clip this unit, complete the section as you watch

The Congress clip 1

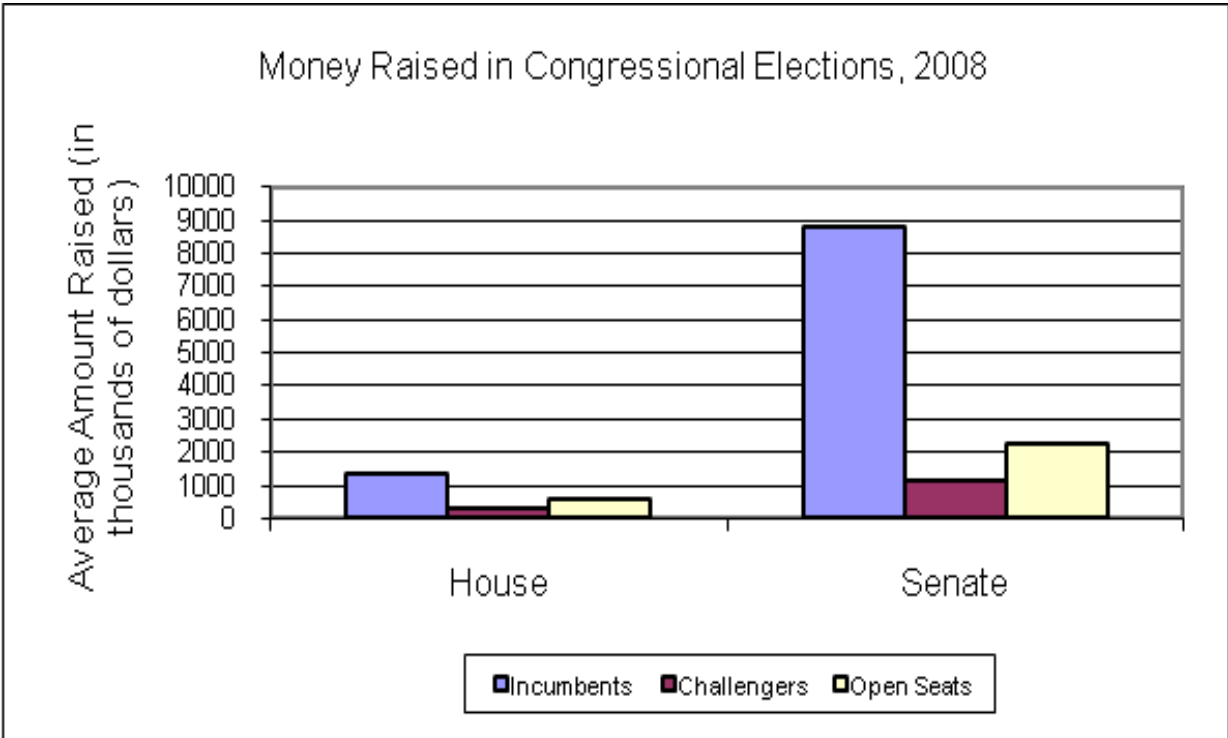
List 3-5 important people, events, procedures, problems, checks, etc. from this section of the documentary

Quotation from this section to remember:

The Congress clip 2

List 3-5 important people, events, procedures, problems, checks, etc. from this section of the documentary

Quotation from this section to remember:



**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CONGRESS IN THE YEARS
1975 AND 2005**

	Sex		Race			Age				
	Male	Female	Black	API	Hispanic	Under 40	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70 +
Representatives										
1975	416	19	17	4	7	69	138	137	75	16
2005	369	65	42	4	23	22	96	175	113	28
Senators										
1975	100	0	1	2	1	5	21	35	24	15
2005	86	14	1	2	2	0	17	29	33	21

API = Asian/Pacific Islanders

Source: US Census Bureau