**Congress Test Study Guide**

1. Describe bicameralism and its effects on Congress.
2. Identify the legislative institution that the Founders thought would be MOST responsive to the public.
3. Assess the typical public approval ratings of Congress.
4. What is the paradox regarding Congress and public opinion?
5. What is the biggest predictor of how a politician will vote?
6. List the different powers that the Constitution gives to either the House or Senate.
7. What was the original method of electing Senators? What was the effect of the 17th Amendment?
8. Name the presidential appointments that require the advice and consent of the Senate.
9. Describe how the Senate’s term length and staggered elections contrast with the House.
10. Explain what is meant by this metaphor from George Washington: “The Senate is the saucer into which we pour legislation to cool.”
11. What do the whips do?
12. What power of congress has been contested the most in courts?
13. Describe the leadership/organizational system in the House and Senate and assess the power of each leader.
14. Why is setting the legislative agenda an important power of congressional leaders?
15. Identify and describe the four types of committees. Give an example of each one.
16. What does the GAO do? What does the CBO do?
17. What are the roles of committees and subcommittees and how does this affect the legislation that gets passed?
18. Describe the purposes of the “caucuses” that exist in Congress.
19. Who can introduce legislation into Congress?
20. What type of bills can only be introduced in the House?
21. Describe the power and duties of the House Rules Committee.
22. What types of rules are there for debate and adding amendments?
23. What is seniority on committees?
24. Why do all revenue bills originate in the House Ways and Means Committee?
25. Briefly describe the steps of how a bill becomes a law.
26. What is logrolling? What is pigeonholing?
27. What is a mark-up session?
28. What is a discharge petition? How often are they used? Explain.
29. Assess the significance of pork barrel spending and earmarks on the legislative process.
30. What is the difference between a Congressional authorization and appropriation?
31. What is a veto? What is a pocket veto?
32. Describe at least 3 differences between the legislative process in the House vs. the Senate.
33. What is a closed rule?
34. What is a filibuster? How is this ended?
35. In what house of Congress can a non-germane amendment be added? Also, describe what a “Christmas tree” bill is.
36. Explain the voting styles of trustee, delegate, partisan and politico.
37. Why are party votes in the House common?
38. Other than lawmaking, explain what the other duties of Congress are. How does Congress use its oversight power?
39. How does Congress engage in the oversight of the bureaucracy?
40. What are the three types of resolutions? Explain them.
41. Who establishes the federal court system: House, Senate or both?
42. What does the Senate Judiciary committee do?
43. Why have some called for congressional term limits?
44. Explain the difference in the power of a single member of the House and a single Senator.
45. How has the composition of the membership of the House and Senate evolved since the 1950s?
46. What are the formal/enumerated powers of Congress?
47. Describe the impeachment process.
48. What is a policy specialist and what type of member of Congress is likely to be one and why?
49. Explain the significance of the elastic clause, supremacy clause, and the commerce clause.
50. How has Congress used the commerce and elastic clauses to expand its power?
51. Define redistricting, reapportionment and gerrymandering. How are they different? Who does this process?
52. List at least five advantages for incumbent members of Congress.
53. Describe the franking privilege. How does this relate to incumbency advantage?
54. Define an open seat, safe seat and a sophomore surge.
55. What is the significance of single member districts?
56. Describe the court cases of *Baker v. Carr* and *Shaw v. Reno*.
57. What is divided government? What is unified government?
58. Why/how has gridlock increased due to Divided government? Incumbency? Redistricting?
59. What are the three qualifications required to become a Senator? Representative?
60. Why is the incumbency/re-election rate higher for the House than the Senate?
61. What does a Congressional staffer do?
62. How and why do incumbents win over 90% of Congressional elections; how does the incumbency advantage effect how Congress works (or doesn’t) as well as the political process); safe seats v. marginal districts.
63. What reforms to Congress have been proposed?