

**AP Government Review UNIT 2**  
**Overarching Topic – Interactions Among Branches of Government**

Here's what you need to do...

- ❖ UNDERSTAND information in the 'Enduring Understanding' column.
- ❖ STUDY / MEMORIZE / KNOW information in the 'Essential Knowledge' column. *You will be tested on this!*
- ❖ In the 'Making Connections' box, OFFER TWO SPECIFIC EXAMPLES from your understanding of government, political practices and/or history which illustrates the 'Essential Knowledge' alongside which it appears. These could be events, facts, or in a rare case, a definition. If you need more room, attach an additional page of paper.
- ❖ Utilize this information and related knowledge when ANSWERING the 'Key/Essential' questions on the last page.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

The republican ideal in the US is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- The Senate is designed to represent states equally, while the House is designed to represent the population
- Different chamber sizes and constituencies influence formality of debate.
- Coalitions in Congress are affected by term-length differences.
- The enumerated and implied powers in the Constitution allow the creation of public policy by Congress, which includes:
  - ↳ Passing a federal budget, raising revenue, and coining money
  - ↳ Declaring war and maintaining armed forces
  - ↳ Enacting legislation that addressed a wide range of economic, environmental, and social issues based on the Necessary and Proper Clause.
- By design, different structures, powers and functions of the Senate and the House affect the policy-making process.
- Though both chambers rely on committees to conduct hearings and debate bills under consideration, different constitutional responsibilities of the House and Senate affect the policy-making process.
- Chamber-specific procedures, rules, and roles that impact the policy-making process include:
  - ↳ Number of chamber and debate rules that set the bar high for building majority support.
  - ↳ Role of Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, party leadership, and committee leadership in both chambers.
  - ↳ Filibuster and cloture
  - ↳ Holds and unanimous consent in the Senate
  - ↳ Role of Rules Committee, Committee of the Whole, and discharge petitions in the House
  - ↳ Treaty ratification and confirmation role of the Senate

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

*Senate = 2 representatives per state.  
 House = the larger the population, the more representatives the state has.*

*House constituencies reflect localized (district) interests. Large states have more power in the house. House is designed for speedy decisions; Senate is a slower process as all states are of equal voice.*

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**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

The republican ideal in the US is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- Congress must generate a budget that addresses both discretionary and mandatory spending, and as entitlement costs grow, discretionary spending opportunities will decrease unless tax revenue the budget deficit increases.
- Pork barrel legislation and logrolling affect lawmaking in both chambers.
- Congressional behavior and governing effectiveness are influenced by:
  - ↳ Ideological divisions within Congress that can lead to gridlock or create the need for negotiation and compromise
  - ↳ Gerrymandering, redistricting, and unequal representation of constituencies have been partially addressed by such Court decisions as **Baker v Carr** (1961), which opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting in states the “one person, one vote” doctrine, and the no-racial-gerrymandering decision in **Shaw v. Reno** (1993)
  - ↳ Elections that have led to a divided government, including partisan votes against presidential initiatives and congressional refusal to confirm appointments of “lame-duck” presidents of the opposite party.
  - ↳ Different role conceptions of “trustee”, “delegate”, and “politico” as related to constituent accountability in each chamber.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers

- Term-of-office and constitutional-power restrictions including the passage of the **Twenty-Second Amendment**, demonstrate the changing presidential roles.
- Different perspectives on the presidential role, ranging from a limited to a more expansive interpretation and use of power, continue to be debated in the context of contemporary events.
- The communication impact of the presidency can be demonstrated through such factors as:
  - ↳ Modern technology, social media, and rapid response to political issues.
  - ↳ Nationally broadcast State of the Union messages and the president’s bully pulpit used as tools for agenda setting.

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**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

The presidency has been  
Enhanced beyond its  
Expressed constitutional  
powers

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- Presidents use powers and perform functions of the office to accomplish a policy agenda
  
- Formal and informal powers of the president include:
  - ↳ Veto and pocket vetoes – formal powers that enable the president to check Congress
  - ↳ Foreign policy – both formal (Commander-in-Chief and treaties) and informal (executive agreements) powers that influence relations with foreign nations.
  - ↳ Bargaining and persuasion – informal power that enables the president to secure congressional action.
  - ↳ Executive orders – implied from the president’s vested executive power, or from power delegated by Congress, executive orders are used by the president to manage the federal government.
  - ↳ Signing statements – informal power that informs Congress and the public of the president’s interpretation of laws passed by Congress and signed by he president.
  
- The potential for conflict with the Senate depends upon the type of executive branch appointments, including:
  - ↳ Cabinet members
  - ↳ Ambassadors
  - ↳ White House staff
  
- Senate confirmation is an important check on appointment powers, but the president’s longest lasting influence lies in life-tenured judicial appointments
  
- Policy initiatives and executive orders promoted by the president often lead to conflict with the congressional agenda.
  
- Justification for a single executive are set forth in Federalist nr.10.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**

**AP Government Review UNIT 2**  
**Overarching Topic – Foundations of American Democracy**

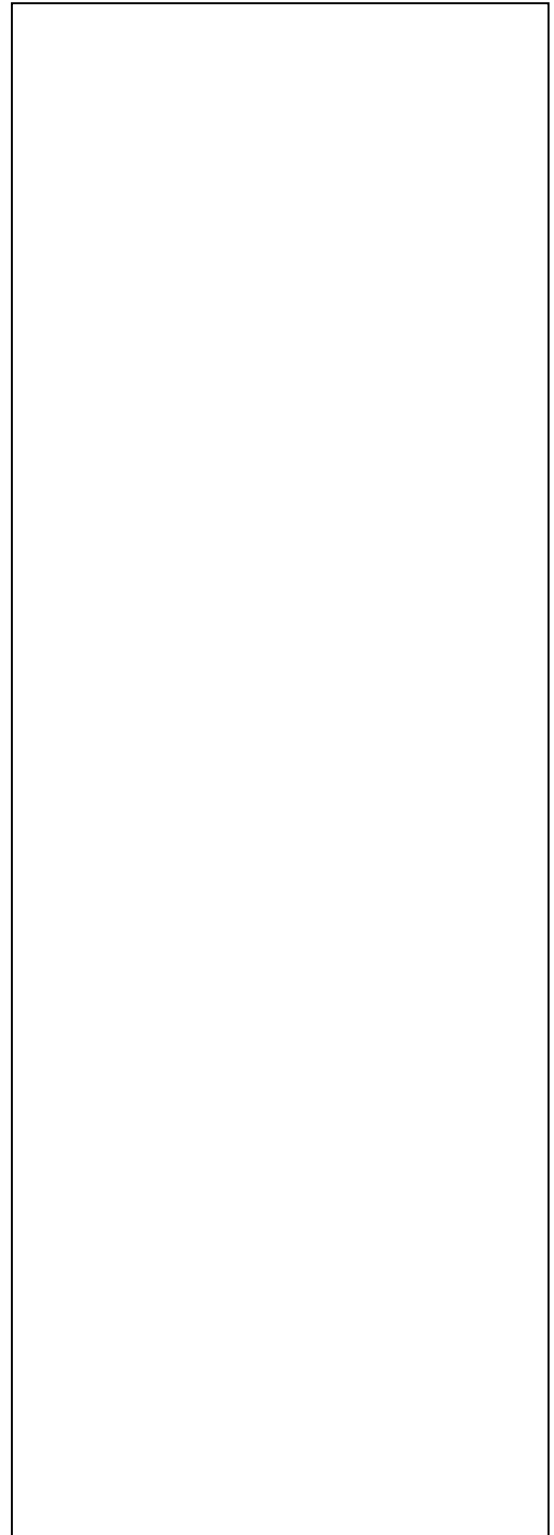
**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court's independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- The foundation for powers of the judicial branch and how its independence checks the power of other institutions and state governments are set forth in:
  - **Article III of the Constitution**
  - **Federalist Nr.78**
  - **Marbury v.Madison (1803)**
  
- Precedents and stare decisis play an important role in judicial decision making.
  
- Ideological changes in the composition of the Supreme Court due to presidential appointments have led to the Court's establishing new or rejecting existing precedents.
  
- Controversial or unpopular Supreme Court decisions can lead to challenges of the Court's legitimacy and power which Congress and the president can address only through future appointments, legislation changing the Court's jurisdiction, or refusing to implement decisions.
  
- Political discussion about the Supreme Court's power is illustrated by the ongoing debate over 'judicial activism' versus 'judicial restraint'.
  
- Restrictions on the Supreme Court are represented by:
  - ↳ Congressional legislation to modify the impact of prior Supreme Court decisions.
  - ↳ Constitutional amendments
  - ↳ Judicial appointments and confirmations
  - ↳ The president and states evading or ignoring Supreme Court decisions.
  - ↳ Legislation impacting court jurisdictions.

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**



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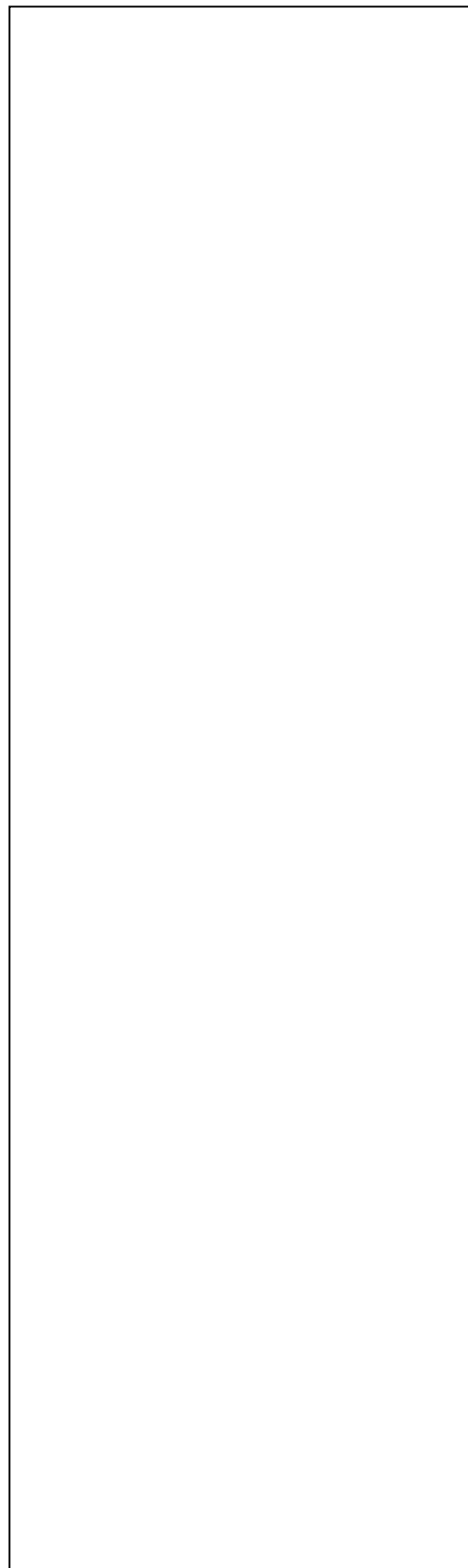
**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

The federal bureaucracy is a powerful institution implementing federal policies with sometimes questionable accountability

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- Tasks performed by departments, agencies, commissions, and government corporations are represented by:
  - Writing and enforcing regulations
  - Issuing fines
  - Testifying before Congress
  - Issue networks and “iron triangles”
  
- Political patronage, civil service, and merit system reforms all impact the effectiveness of the bureaucracy by promoting professionalism, specialization, and neutrality
  
- Discretionary and rule-making authority to implement policy are given to bureaucratic departments, agencies and commissions, such as:
  - ↳ Department of Homeland Security
  - ↳ Department of Transportation
  - ↳ Department of Veteran Affairs
  - ↳ Department of Education
  - ↳ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - ↳ Federal Elections Commission (FEC)
  - ↳ Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
  
- Oversight and methods used by Congress to ensure that legislation is implemented as intended are represented by:
  - ↳ Committee Hearings
  - ↳ Power of the purse
  
- As a means to curtail the use of presidential power, congressional oversight serves as a check of executive authorization and appropriation.
  
- Presidential ideology, authority, and influence affect how executive branch agencies carry out the goals of the administration
  
- Compliance monitoring can pose a challenge to policy implementation.
  
- Formal and informal powers of Congress, the president, and the courts over the bureaucracy are used to maintain its accountability

**MAKING CONNECTIONS**



## AP Government Review UNIT 2

### Overarching Topic – Foundations of American Democracy

Here's what you need to do...

- ❖ CONSIDER the content and scope of coverage from the review sheets you did in this packet
- ❖ ANSWER the following questions. Each answer must...
  - ✓ Be direct and to-the-point
    - ↳ Be sure you are answering the question being asked, not just commenting on the topic of the question.
  - ✓ Include an opening stand-alone sentence which rewords/reframes/repurposes the question toward your answer (like a thesis statement might). This sentence can then be followed by 2-3 paragraphs in answering each question. (in a real AP exam there would be more than this; for our preparation purposes 2-3 paragraphs are sufficient)
  - ✓ Offer multiple (3-4) specific examples from political practices, electorate behavior, government structure, and/or history which is relevant to your answer.
  - ✓ Offer a definition of any key terms of vocabulary.
- ❖ You will need to hand write (not type!) this on separate paper, and then attach it to the rest of the Unit Packet and turn it all in together.

#### Legislative Branch Key Questions

1. Describe the different structures, powers and functions of each house of Congress
2. Explain how the structure, powers and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process
3. Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.

#### Executive Branch Key Questions

1. Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda
2. Explain how the president's agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress
3. Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers
4. Explain how communication technology has changed the president's relationship with the national constituency and other branches.

#### Judicial Branch Key Questions

1. Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments
2. Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power
3. Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.

#### Bureaucracy Key Questions

1. Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government
2. Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation
3. Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch
4. Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies and departments carry out their responsibilities in concert with the goals of the administration
5. Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interest of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.

#### Essential Questions

1. How do the branches of national government compete and cooperate in order to govern?
2. To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national government is in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?