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Chapter 2: Evolution of the Modern Congress

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. Most of the newly formed states wrote constitutions that gave the bulk of powers to which branch of government?
a. Legislative
b. Executive
c. Judicial
d. Bureaucracy
Ans: a
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: The Colonial Experience
Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Which of the following powers does the Constitution *not* grant to Congress?
a. Broad powers of taxing and spending
b. Power to declare laws unconstitutional
c. Power to regulate interstate commerce
d. Power to issue copyrights
Ans: b
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Powers of Congress
Difficulty Level: Easy

3. Which of the following foreign policy powers is *not* granted to the U.S. Congress?
a. Declaring war
b. Ratifying treaties
c. Designating a Commander-in-Chief

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d. Funding the army and navy

Ans: c

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Powers of Congress

Difficulty Level: Easy

4. Which of the following limitations on government power is *not* specifically listed in the Bill of Rights?

a. Right to free speech

b. Prohibition on establishing a national religion

c. Prohibition of arbitrary arrest

d. Right to privacy

Ans: d

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Limits on Legislative Power

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. Which of the following powers allows the president to influence the direction of legislation in Congress?

a. The president can veto legislation passed by Congress.

b. Congress is required to vote on any bill proposed by the president.

c. The president appoints the Speaker of the House.

d. The president can introduce legislation into Congress.

Ans: a

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. Which of the following elements of the modern Congress is outlined specifically in the Constitution?

a. Party organizations

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b. Bicameralism

c. The committee system

d. The filibuster

Ans: b

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Bicameralism

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Which of the following is an institutional development utilized by Congress to deal with increasing workload pressures?

a. Congressional overrides

b. Impeachment proceedings that are divided among the House and Senate

c. The creation of an extensive system of standing committees

d. The filibuster

Ans: c

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Institutional Evolution

Difficulty Level: Medium

8. Which of the following is *not* an indicator of increased professionalization in Congress?

a. Increased numbers of congressional staff.

b. Congress is in session for more days each year.

c. Being a member of Congress is now a full-time job.

d. Higher levels of fundraising are required to be elected.

Ans: d

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Professionalization

Difficulty Level: Medium

9. Which of the following is *not* an example of constituency service?

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a. Sending out a newsletter to constituents

b. Helping a constituent access Social Security benefits

c. Sending a fundraising letter to constituents

d. Responding to a constituent's e-mail about an upcoming vote

Ans: c

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Constituency Demands

Difficulty Level: Medium

10. Which of the following features of government did the founders adopt from the British political system?

a. Judicial review by the Supreme Court

b. The president's power to appoint governors and other local officials

c. The president was designated as the most important policy-maker

d. A bicameral structure to Congress

Ans: d

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Bicameralism

Difficulty Level: Medium

11. Which of the following provisions in the Constitution helps foster congressional independence?

a. The president's veto power.

b. Members generally cannot be arrested during congressional sessions, except in extreme circumstances.

c. Political parties help fund electoral campaigns and provide other resources such as voter outreach.

d. Congressional committees are carefully designed to avoid outside influence.

Ans: b

Cognitive Domain: Application

Answer Location: Powers of Congress

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Difficulty Level: Medium

12. Which of the following is *not* a required step for removing the president from office during his term?
a. The House of Representatives draws up articles of impeachment.
b. The House of Representatives adopts articles of impeachment by majority vote.
c. The Supreme Court approves the articles of impeachment with a unanimous vote.
d. The Senate convicts on one or more of the articles of impeachment with a two-thirds vote.
Ans: c
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Medium

True/False

1. The Stamp Act, Tea Act, and Intolerable Acts were all British enactments that spurred opposition and protest in the colonies.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: The Colonial Experience
Difficulty Level: Easy

2. The U.S. Congress was the first representative legislative body in the world.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: The English Heritage
Difficulty Level: Easy

3. When writing new state constitutions after the Revolutionary War, all states included a bill of rights.

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Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: The Colonial Experience
Difficulty Level: Easy

4. The Constitution describes the powers and organization of Congress in much more detail than those of the president.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Congress in the Constitution
Difficulty Level: Easy

5. Executive privilege is defined as the power of the president to implement congressional statutes.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Easy

6. The Supreme Court case *Marbury v. Madison* established the power of judicial review.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Judicial Review
Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Congress's power was sharply limited by new amendments ratified in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Powers of Congress

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Difficulty Level: Easy

8. Congress's power to pass laws its members believe are in the best interests of the nation is essentially unlimited.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Powers of Congress
Difficulty Level: Easy

9. The powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches are strictly separated and never overlap.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Easy

10. Congress's workload has increased dramatically over time and has often prompted institutional reforms.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Workload
Difficulty Level: Easy

11. The Senate tends to be more informal, while the House of Representatives operates under more complex and formal rules.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: The Size of Congress
Difficulty Level: Easy

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12. The filibuster is difficult to reform because it is outlined in the Constitution and would require a constitutional amendment to change or eliminate.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Members' Individual Interests
Difficulty Level: Easy

13. Under the Constitution, all war powers belong to the president as Commander-in-Chief.
Ans: F
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Powers of Congress
Difficulty Level: Easy

14. Unlike in a parliamentary system, Senators and House members in the United States are prohibited from taking jobs in the executive branch while in office.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Easy

15. On average, modern Congresses typically pass laws enacting a majority of the president's policy proposals.
Ans: T
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Easy

Essay

1. What elements in colonial America fostered the growth of democratic institutions?

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Ans: Answers vary. Good answers would include a selection of the following elements: the development of colonial assemblies modeled on the House of Commons and exercising substantial law-making powers; experience with parliamentary bodies from British heritage; town meetings and separatists' church assemblies; an independent press; distrust of the British Crown resulting in a desire for independent government; and experiences at the First and Second Continental Congresses.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: The Colonial Experience
Difficulty Level: Easy

2. How has party politics influenced institutional development in Congress? Be sure to illustrate your answer with a specific example.
Ans: Answers vary. Parties have influenced the development of committees, floor procedure, and other aspects of congressional rules; and institutional arrangements are often the result of partisan battles. The most relevant example from the text (although students could manage others) is the adoption of Reed's Rules in 1890. Majority party Republicans passed these rules in order to prevent the Democratic Party from obstructing its agenda, with long-term institutional consequences.
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Partisan Interests
Difficulty Level: Medium

3. Why did the newly formed states initially designate the legislative branch as the most powerful?
Ans: Answers vary. The colonists feared executive power because of their experience with both the British King and with colonial governors who they believed abused their power and did not respect the wishes of the people. Thus, they tended to vest the majority of power in state or national legislative bodies.
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: The Colonial Experience
Difficulty Level: Easy

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4. In what ways can Congress influence the judicial branch?
Ans: Answers vary. Good answers would include an explanation of some of the following constitutional provisions: Congress sets the number of justices on the Supreme Court; Congress selects the number and types of lower federal courts; Congress defines the courts' jurisdictions by statute, including the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, limiting federal court discretion through mandatory minimum sentences and other statutes; Senate must approve judicial appointments.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Easy

5. How did the Civil War amendments impact national power?
Ans: Answers vary. These amendments eventually led to a dramatic increase in national (including congressional) power. Although they were passed in response to the end of slavery, the language of these amendments is broad and refers to "all persons." Congress is authorized to enforce the amendments through legislation. Further, the Supreme Court has interpreted these amendments as nationalizing key protections in the Bill of Rights.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: Powers of Congress
Difficulty Level: Medium

6. Outline two important limitations on congressional power and give an example of each.
Ans: Answers vary. Limitations could include judicial review, presidential veto, dependence on executive to implement laws, enumerated (rather than general) powers in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, specific limitations on congressional power listed in the Constitution, and public pressure/the re-election motive. Examples will vary.
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Congress in the Constitution

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Difficulty Level: Medium

7. How does the veto power allow the president to influence congressional legislation?
Ans: Answers vary. Beyond simply blocking legislation, the veto can have other influences on the content of legislation. Presidents can write veto messages that suggest revisions to make presidential approval more likely. They can also threaten vetoes publicly or privately, causing members of Congress to add, subtract, or revise provisions in a bill to gain presidential support.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Easy

8. How can Congress respond when the Supreme Court exercises the power of judicial review? Provide examples to illustrate your answer.
Ans: Answers vary. Possible answers include doing nothing and ignoring the ruling, amending the statute in question to comply, repealing the law and passing (or not) new legislation, and seeking a constitutional amendment. Students could provide a variety of examples illustrating these approaches, such as reconstruction amendments in response to *Dred Scott* or continued use of the legislative veto after *Chadha*.
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Judicial Review
Difficulty Level: Medium

9. What are congressional overrides and why have they become increasingly rare in recent years?
Ans: Answers vary. When the Supreme Court interprets a statute, Congress can dispute that interpretation through a congressional override, or a statute passed to clarify the meaning of the law. These overrides question and sometimes reverse the Court's statutory interpretation. They have become rarer as Congress has become more polarized, because it is increasingly difficult for members of Congress to agree on the content of an override.

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Cognitive Domain: Analysis
Answer Location: Judicial Review
Difficulty Level: Hard

10. Why did the framers choose bicameralism to organize Congress?
Ans: Answers vary. One reason is tradition—Congress was modeled on the British system as well as many state legislatures. Creating two chambers also allowed the framers to satisfy two important constituencies that needed to ratify the new Constitution—small states that preferred apportionment based on equal representation for states (i.e., the Senate) and large states that preferred apportionment based on population (i.e., the House).
Cognitive Domain: Knowledge
Answer Location: Bicameralism
Difficulty Level: Easy

11. Why has the filibuster survived despite the interest of the majority party to eliminate it?
Ans: Answers vary. Individual Senators have a substantial interest in maintaining the filibuster as a way to exert individual influence over legislation. The filibuster requires Senate leadership to negotiate with individual members, and this requirement would not be so powerful if it were eliminated or reformed. Students might also mention that parties know they might not be in the majority forever and want to reserve this minority power for future Congresses.
Cognitive Domain: Analysis
Answer Location: Members' Individual Interests
Difficulty Level: Hard

12. Why has careerism among members of Congress risen over time?
Ans: Answers vary. Students could mention a variety of causes and should explain the logic of the causes they mention. These include the rise in one-party states/districts

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making reelection easier; congressional service has become more rewarding; and rewards for seniority have increased.
Cognitive Domain: Comprehension
Answer Location: The Congressional Career
Difficulty Level: Easy

13. How do Congress and the president depend on each other to function effectively?
Ans: Answers vary. Even though Congress is granted "legislative powers" under the Constitution, it cannot function effectively without the involvement of the president, who plays an important law-making role. Good essays will touch on some of the following points: Formally, the president can veto any legislation passed by Congress and Congress can only overrule a veto with a two-thirds vote in both houses; practically, this means that Congress will typically negotiate with the president in drafting legislation. Though this power is not formal, the president plays an important agenda-setting role through the State of the Union and other legislative proposals. Finally, the president is tasked with carrying out or executing the laws passed by Congress; without effective execution of laws, they lack the power to affect change. Students might also identify areas of interdependence in the foreign policy arena.
Cognitive Domain: Analysis
Answer Location: Separate Branches, Shared Powers
Difficulty Level: Hard

14. What is meant by the "institutionalization" of Congress and what factors led to its development?
Ans: Answers vary. Institutionalization describes Congress's growth and development over time, including the professionalization of members, increasing organizational complexity, and the elaboration of formal rules to govern internal business. Students should identify and explain some of the following factors that help explain institutionalization, with attention to how the factor(s) described contributed to one or more of the elements of institutionalization: legislative workload, institutional size, conflict with the executive, and partisanship.

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Cognitive Domain: Analysis
Answer Location: Institutional Evolution
Difficulty Level: Medium

15. Identify an important institutional reform in congressional history. Explain how and why this reform was achieved with reference to one or more of the explanations outlined in the text.
Ans: Answers vary. Students should clearly identify a reform and explain how one or more of the following explanations helps explain why it passed: increased workload, increased size of Congress, interbranch conflict, partisan interests, and/or individual interests. Students should provide information on the individuals who supported and opposed the reform and the strategies they used. The best essays will consider alternate explanations for the reform and provide counterarguments.
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Institutional Evolution
Difficulty Level: Hard

16. Select a bill recently passed by Congress and signed by the president. Explain how interbranch interactions (and possibly conflict) influenced the policy that was eventually implemented.
Ans: Answers vary. Depending on the bill selected, students might describe some of the following dynamics: presidential agenda-setting through the State of the Union or other public pronouncements, veto threats (and/or actual vetoes and subsequent override or amended bill), consideration of constitutionality/judicial reaction by members of Congress, judicial review after the passage of the bill, executive discretion in implementing the statute, and so on.
Cognitive Domain: Application
Answer Location: Various
Difficulty Level: Hard

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