Political Science 1

Spring 2019

Final

Please answer the following ten questions using only your text and lecture notes. The exam is worth 200 points. Good luck!

1. Congress has specialized agencies that are designed to deal with specific tasks. These specialized agencies are known as committees. Primarily, these are four main types: select committee, conference committee, committee of the whole house, and subcommittee.

Standing committees are for speedy decision-making processes. They have experts on every important subject of the state. Conference committees are responsible for resolving deadlocks between the two houses of congress on the proposed bills. Sub committees deal with specialized legislation. Furthermore, select committee usually investigate scandals in the administration. Then, Committee of the whole house is the one which discusses every bill and then sent it for approval.

1. The House of Representative elects its own speaker. His purpose is to summons and prorogues the session. He is usually a biased representative who takes his party’s side openly. Whereas, the vice president’s role in senate is similar in presiding the session, but it is not a partisan position. He doesn’t take the sides while discussing any issue and casts his vote only to remove deadlock in any issue. The vice president is the link between executive and legislature in US political system. The significance of the vice president is more vis-à-vis speaker of House of representative.
2. The Congressional Budget office is very much important in the process of budgeting. This body is unbiased and non- partisan in its working. The main role of Congressional budget office is to provide information to congress about the finances. This body analysis economic conditions and public reports for better economic policies in the country. This office is important in its nature because it is the source of information for the congress which enjoys a dominant position in the financial matters. No budget can pass without the approval of congress members.
3. The Office of management and budget deals with process of making financial plan of the government. This is the source of help to the Executive branch or the president. The officials prepare the list of estimates and expense of the administration. This really ameliorates the burden of executive branch in the government as the proposal for grants or money is prepared by this office. Then, this proposal is put forward for debate and discussion. Moreover, it also analyses the working of several agencies of administration and their effectiveness. The president really gets an overall picture of the money spent and the money needed in the administration.
4. Everywhere around the world, the legislature controls the budgeting process. So, the budget of USA is controlled by the congress- the legislative branch of the US government. More precisely, it is the senate of US congress that has the final say in the budgeting. The president prepares the budget and ask for appropriations for the annual year. It is then debated in both houses and the senate allocates it. The role of congress is that it first approves of the financial plan of the president and its administration. Then, the president allocates a certain portion of funds to the respective departments of his administration.
5. Hatch Act is a federal law which illuminated the point that people working in the executive branch of the government are refrained to engage in any political activity. They are not allowed to take part in any political debates or acts. This act was passed to make executive more neutral in its operations. However, this Hatch Act does not apply to the president, vice president, and other high officials in the US government. This act is still applicable, and it should continue in order to make the executive branch more restricted in its use of power. This is a good step that prevents the abuse of authority in the executive branch.
6. The federal court system has a defined structure. The apex court in the country is the Supreme Court. Then comes circuit courts and the lowest tier is about district courts. The federal district courts are authorized to hear cases related to treaties and constitution. However, the federal court can only hear cases related to constitution. There are 94 district courts and 13 circuit courts in the country and one apex court. There are some other courts as well that owe their existence to legislature. Such courts are territorial courts, courts of military appeal, and the courts of the District of Columbia.
7. Defense attorneys exist in every legal system around the world. Their prime purpose is to provide help to the accused. So the defense attorney in our court system works on the same principal of helping the culprit in the legal process, and to negotiate plea bargains. He is the person who advises the accused about the possible repercussions in wake of his criminal activity, and suggest him the best way to deal with his crime. He is very important in the US judicial system. Defense attorneys are of two kinds: civil and criminal. Both protect people from irrational applications of law in the process.
8. Iron triangle is the mutually beneficial relationship among the dominant actors in the society. In case of US, it is the mutual consensus of congressmen, bureaucrats, and the special groups such as pressure groups in the political system. This iron triangle reflects the partnership of these three important stakeholders that shape and guide the course of American society and the importance policies in the administration.
9. Lobbying is the phenomenon of back-door influencing policy-making in the political system. This is the concept where pressure groups are involved and they project their own preferred versions of policy-making. This is legal but immoral in a sense that a few influential interest groups control the reins of government instead of people’s aspiration. Sadly, this has become a household name in the US political system where it is opined that lobbies control the congress officials. Private Citizens involved in this lobbying process. They are mostly owners of the big corporations that enjoy the influence over successive governments in US.