

# Unit 4: Institutions of National Government: The Congress, The Presidency, The Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts

Content Area: **History**  
Course(s):  
Time Period:  
Length: **31 Days**  
Status: **Published**

## State Mandated Topics Addressed in this Unit

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|---|-----|
| N/A   | N/A |

## Unit Goals

The major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power; the relationships among these four institutions and varying balances of power; and the linkages between institutions and the following: public opinion and voters, and interest groups, and political parties, the media, and state and local governments.

## Standards

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|---------------------|---|
| SOC.9-12.LO 1.6.A   | Explain the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances.  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 1.6.A.1 | The specific and separate powers delegated to Congress, the president, and the courts allow each branch to check and balance the power of the other branches, ensuring no one branch becomes too powerful.                            |
| SOC.9-12.2          | Interactions Among Branches of Government   |
| SOC.9-12.2.1        | Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives   |
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.1.A   | Describe the different structures, powers, and functions of each house of Congress.   |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.1.A.3 | Interactions in Congress are affected by the two-party system and term-length differences. One-third of the Senate is elected every two years, creating a continuous legislative body. All House members are elected every two years. |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.1.A.4 | The enumerated and implied powers in the Constitution allow Congress to participate in the public policy process by:  |
| SOC.9-12.2.2        | Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress   |
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.2.A   | Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process.   |
| SOC.9-12.2.3        | Congressional Behavior  |

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|--------------------------|---|
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.3.A        | Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.   |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.3.A.1      | Congressional behavior and governing effectiveness are influenced by ideological divisions between political parties. Partisan voting (when members of Congress vote based on their political party affiliation) and polarization (when political attitudes move toward ideological extremes) can lead to gridlock (a situation in which no congressional action on legislation can be taken due to a lack of consensus). |
| SOC.9-12.2.4             | Roles and Powers of the President   |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.4.A.2      | The powers of the president include both formal and informal powers.  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.4.A.2.i    | Vetoes and pocket vetoes are formal powers that enable the president to check Congress, but vetoes can be overridden with a 2/3 vote while pocket vetoes cannot be overridden with a 2/3 vote.  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.4.A.2.iii  | Bargaining and persuasion are informal powers that enable the president to secure congressional action.   |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.4.A.2.iv   | Executive orders allow the president to manage the federal government and are implied by the president's vested executive power or by power delegated by Congress.  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.4.A.2.v    | Signing statements are informal powers that inform Congress and the public of the president's interpretation of laws passed by Congress and signed by the president.  |
| SOC.9-12.2.5             | Checks on the Presidency  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.5.A.3      | Policy conflicts with the congressional agenda (the formal list of policies Congress is considering at any given time) can lead the president to use executive orders and directives to the bureaucracy to address the president's own agenda items.  |
| SOC.9-12.2.11            | Checks on the Judicial Branch   |
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.11.B       | Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.   |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.11.B.1.i   | Congressional legislation to modify the impact of prior Supreme Court decisions   |
| SOC.9-12.2.12            | The Bureaucracy   |
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.12.A       | Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government.   |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.12.A.1     | The federal bureaucracy is composed of departments, agencies, commissions, and government corporations that implement policy by:  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.12.A.1.iii | Testifying before Congress  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.12.A.1.iv  | Forming iron triangles (alliances of congressional committees, bureaucratic agencies, and interest groups that are prominent in specific policy areas)  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.13.A.1     | The federal bureaucracy uses discretionary power as delegated by Congress to interpret and implement policies. Through their rulemaking authority, federal bureaucratic agencies utilize their discretion to create and enforce regulations. Bureaucratic agencies include:   |
| SOC.9-12.2.14            | Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable   |
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.14.A       | Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch.  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.14.A.2     | As a means to curtail the use of presidential power, congressional oversight serves as a check of executive authorization.  |
| SOC.9-12.2.15            | Policy and the Branches of Government   |
| SOC.9-12.LO 2.15.A       | Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interests of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.  |
| SOC.9-12.EK 2.15.A.1     | Formal and informal powers of Congress, the president, and the courts over the bureaucracy are used to maintain its accountability.   |

## Learning Objectives

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- What are the powers of the Bureaucracy?
- What are the powers of the Federal Courts?
- What power does the President have?
- What powers do Congress have?

## Essential Skills

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- Artists will be able to explain the linkages between institutions and the following: public opinion and voters, and interest groups, and political parties, the media, and state and local governments.
- Artists will be able to explain the relationships between the four institutions and their varying balances of power.
- Artists will be able to identify the major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power.

## Instructional Tasks/Activities

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### Textbook Readings

|   |   |
|---|---|
| The major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power         | Pages 4-10, 32-34, 53-67, 301-337, 338-378, 379-406, 407-436.   |
| Relationships among these four institutions and varying balances of power | Pages 32-34, 41-43, 53-57, 301-305, 341-345, 352-360, 365-374, 396-400, 408-410, 417-420, 427-434, 492-494, 516-520 |
| Linkages between institutions and the following:                          |   |
| 1. Public opinion and voters  | Pages 151-170, 181-184, 247-249, 265, 352, 432-434  |
| 1. Interest groups  | Pages 233-241, 251-275  |
| 1. Political parties  | Pages 189-192, 241-243, 305-307, 315-322  |
| 1. The media  | Pages 219-222, 228-233, 276-300   |
| 1. State and local governments  | Pages 51-75, 176-179, 202-206   |

| Day | Topic   | LANAHAN Supplemental Readings                 | Pages   |
|-----|---|---|---------|
| 1   | YLI-Power of the American Presidency: Hail to the Chief Day 1 | 37. Gil Troy – Leading From the Center (2008) | 256-263 |

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|----|---|--|---------|
| 2  | YLI-Power of the American Presidency: Hail to the Chief Day 2 |  |         |
| 3  | Presidency On Trial: The limits on Presidential Power Day 1   | 35. Thomas Cronin/Michael Genovese – The Paradoxes of the American Presidency (1998) | 225-235 |
| 4  | Presidency On Trial: The limits on Presidential Power Day 2   |  |         |
| 5  | Executive Power: Detaining US Citizens as Enemy Combatants    | 34. Michael Cairo – The “Imperialism Presidency” Triumphant (2006)                   | 225-235 |
| 6  | Presidential Power Post 9/11: Comparing Bush and Obama Day 1  |  |         |
| 7  | Presidential Power Post 9/11: Comparing Bush and Obama Day 2  |  |         |
| 8  | Presidential Review   |  |         |
| 9  | Presidential Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ             |  |         |
| 10 | YLI – How Congress Works Part 1                               | 22. David Mayhew – Congress: The Electoral Connection (1974)                         | 147-150 |
| 11 | YLI – How Congress Works Part 2                               | 30. Senator John McCain – Hey There! SenJohnMcCain is Using Twitter (2009)           | 195-200 |
| 12 | How a bill becomes a law                                      | 25. Gregory Wawro/Eric Schickler – Filibuster (2006)                                 | 163-170 |
| 13 | Congressional Earmarks  | 29. John Ellwood/Eric Patashnik – In Praise of Pork (1993)                           | 190-194 |
| 14 | Congressional War Powers                                      |  |         |
| 15 | War Powers Resolution   |  |         |
| 16 | Congressional Review  |  |         |
| 17 | Congressional Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ            |  |         |
| 18 | Become a U.S. Supreme Court Justice                           | 43. Alexander Hamilton – The Federalist 78 (1787)                                    | 311-315 |
| 19 | Granting Certiorari   |  |         |
| 20 | Nominating Federal Judges 1                                   | 45. David O’Brien – Storm Center (1993)  | 321-325 |
| 21 | Nominating Federal Judges 2                                   |  |         |

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|----|---|--|---------|
| 22 | Interest Groups and the U.S. Supreme Court 1                  | 47. Richard Fallon – The Dynamic Constitution (2004) | 333-344 |
| 23 | Interest Groups and the U.S. Supreme Court 2                  |  |         |
| 24 | Interest Groups and the U.S. Supreme Court 3                  |  |         |
| 25 | Federal Courts Review   |  |         |
| 26 | Federal Courts Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ           |  |         |
| 27 | Departments and Agencies of the Bureaucracy, and what they do | 40. Paul Light – A Government Ill Executed (2008)    | 282-289 |
| 28 | Simulation: Create a classroom Bureaucracy                    | 42. James Q. Wilson – Bureaucracy (1989)             | 302-310 |
| 29 | Bureaucracy Review and FRQ                                    |  |         |
| 30 | Unit Review   |  |         |
| 31 | Unit Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ                     |  |         |

- Become a Supreme Court Justice
- Bureaucratic Departments
- Bureaucratic Review
- Bureaucratic Simulation
- Congressional Assessment MC and FRQ
- Congressional Earmarks
- Congressional Power Structure
- Congressional practice FRQ
- Congressional Review
- Congressional War Powers
- Election Exit Poll Project
- Executive Branch FRQ Quiz
- Executive Branch FRQ Test
- Executive Branch MC Test
- Executive Branch Review
- Executive Power - Enemy Combatants
- Executive Power - Hail to the Chief
- Federal Courts Review
- Granting Cert

- How a bill becomes a Law
- How Congress Works 1
- How Congress Works 2
- Interest Groups and the SCOTUS
- Landmark SCOTUS Cases Project
- Leading From Center
- Legislative Branch Quiz
- Limits on Presidential Power
- Nominating Federal Judges
- Presidential Powers Post 9/11
- Scotus Review
- The Paradoxes of the American Presidency
- War Powers Resolution

## **Assessment Procedure**

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- Bureaucracy Review and FRQ
- Bureaucracy simulation
- Classroom Total Participation Technique
- Classwork
- Congressional Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ
- DBQ
- Essay
- Exit Ticket/Entrance Ticket/Do Now
- Federal Courts Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ
- Journal / Student Reflection
- Kahoot
- Other named in lesson
- Peer Review
- Performance
- Presidential Assessment – Multiple Choice and FRQ
- Problem Correction
- Project
- Quiz
- Rubric
- Teacher Collected Data
- Test
- Worksheet
- YLI Handouts

## **Recommended Technology Activities**

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- Appropriate Content Specific Online Resource
- Chromebook
- Copy/Paste Content Specific Link Here
- Copy/Paste Content Specific Link Here
- Copy/Paste Content Specific Link Here
- Gimkit
- GoGuardian
- Google Classroom
- Google Docs
- Google Forms
- Google Slides
- Kahoot
- MagicSchool AI
- Other- Specified in Lesson
- Quiziz
- Screencastify

## **Accommodations & Modifications & Differentiation**

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Accommodations and Modifications should be used to meet individual needs. Their IEP and 504 plans should be used in addition to the following suggestions.

## **Gifted and Talented**

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- Compare & Contrast
- Conferencing
- Debates
- Jigsaw
- Peer Partner Learning
- Problem Solving
- Structured Controversy
- Think, Pair, Share
- Tutorial Groups

## **Instruction/Materials**

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- alter format of materials (type/highlight, etc.)
- color code materials
- eliminate answers
- extended time
- extended time
- large print
- modified quiz
- modified test
- Modify Assignments as Needed
- Modify/Repeat/Model directions
- necessary assignments only
- Other (specify in plans)
- other- named in lesson
- provide assistance and cues for transitions
- provide daily assignment list
- read class materials orally
- reduce work load
- shorten assignments
- study guide/outline
- utilize multi-sensory modes to reinforce instruction

## **Environment**

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- alter physical room environment
- assign peer tutors/work buddies/note takers
- assign preferential seating
- individualized instruction/small group
- modify student schedule (Describe)
- other- please specify in plans
- provide desktop list/formula

## **Honors Modifications**

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## **Resources**

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- Article II of the Constitution



- Articles from current newspapers, such as The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal
- College Board AP Classroom materials
- Hamdi v. Rumsfeld
- News footage and documentaries: C-SPAN's coverage and current events materials
- News magazines excerpts from Time, Newsweek, or The Economist
- Serow, Ann G., and Ladd, Everett C. The LANAHAN READINGS in the American Polity, 5th ed. Baltimore, 2011
- War Powers Resolution
- Web based resources including: Youth Leadership Initiative, the Bill of Rights in Action, and numerous websites.
- Wilson, James Q., Dilulio, John J., and Bose, Meena. American Government: Institutions and Policies AP Edition, 14e. Stamford: Cengage Learning, 2015