

Magruder's American Government

EQ #14- How is Congress Organized? Who are the key leaders and what do they do?

Warm-Up- Answer using one of these - HOUSE / SENATE / BOTH

- 1 Represents more voters?
- 2 Has LESS prestige?
- 3 Is collectively known as Congress.
- 4 Is up for election every TWO years?
- 5 Has to be at least 25 years old?
- 6 Must be a citizen for 9 years?
- 7 Gives advice and consent to President?
- 8 Has a SIX year term?
- 9 Forms our republic / represents us *indirectly*?

Congress in Action

[SECTION 1 Congress Organizes](#)

[SECTION 2 Committees in Congress](#)

[SECTION 3 How a Bill Becomes a Law:](#)

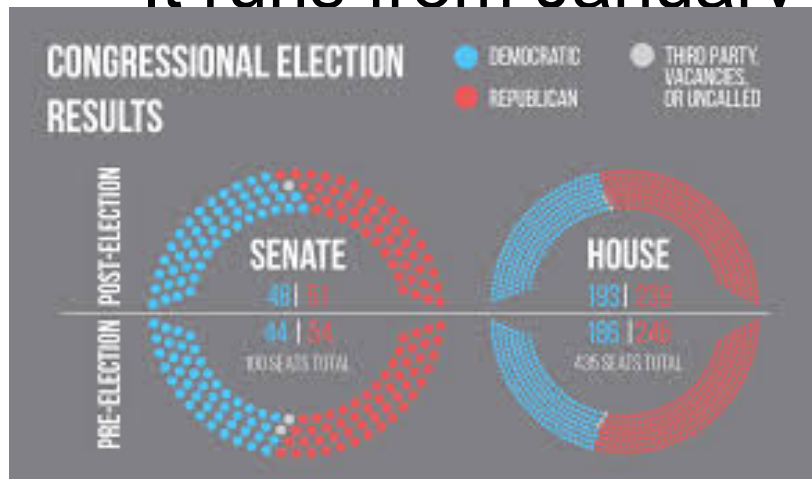
[The House](#)

[SECTION 4 The Bill in the Senate](#)



When is Congress in Session?

- Congress (House and Senate) begins a new term every two years—on January 3 of every odd-numbered year.
- The current Congress is the 116th Congress – It runs from January 3, 2019, to January 3, 2021.



| Category | Democrats | | Republicans | | Total | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----|-------------|-----|-------|-----|
| Party | 48 | 48% | 52 | 52% | 100 | |
| New Member | 5 | 10% | 2 | 4% | 7 | 7% |
| Fewer Than Six Years | 18 | 38% | 18 | 35% | 36 | 36% |
| Split-Ticket State | 11 | 23% | 3 | 6% | 14 | 14% |
| Women | 16 | 33% | 5 | 10% | 21 | 21% |
| Black | 2 | 4% | 1 | 2% | 3 | 3% |
| Hispanic | 2 | 4% | 2 | 4% | 4 | 4% |
| Asian | 3 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 3 | 3% |
| Racial or Ethnic Minorities | 6 | 13% | 3 | 6% | 9 | 9% |
| Openly LGBTQ | 1 | 2% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 1% |
| Women/Minorities/LGBTQ | 18 | 38% | 8 | 15% | 26 | 26% |

Congress Organizes & Elects Leaders

- What happens each new term?
- The **HOUSE** has formal organizational meetings at the beginning of each term to determine
 1. Committee membership and
 2. Leadership positions.
- The **Senate**, because it is a continuous body, has fewer organizational issues to address at the start of each term.
- What is “**continuous body**?”



Who are the key leaders in the

House? What does the Speaker do?

The Speaker of the House

- The **Speaker of the House** is the most powerful leader in the House and of the majority.



Keeps order in the House
during debates and
proceedings

Makes committee
assignments.

Can make it easier or
harder to pass laws.



House Majority and Minority Leaders

Majority & Minority Floor Leaders

- The HOUSE floor leaders are party leaders picked for their posts by other party members. There is a majority and minority floor leader (one from each party).
- They are the next MOST powerful in their party (after the Speaker in the House)
- The Senate Majority Leader is the most powerful member of the Senate.



Senate Leadership- Who Presides over Senate?

The President of the Senate

- The job of **president of the Senate** is assigned by the Constitution to the Vice President.
- the president of the Senate keeps order during debates and runs the floor
- But can only vote to break a tie and doesn't have much real power.
- **Is NOT the most powerful leader in the Senate!**

Who is most powerful in the Senate?

The Majority Leader

- Senate MAJORITY LEADER is the MOST powerful member of the Senate
- Is voted in by the majority party to be the key spokesperson for his/her party in the Senate.
- Minority party also has a Minority Leader.
- Works to advance his/her party's agenda.

President Pro tempore of the Senate

- The **president *pro tempore*** is elected from the Senate and serves in the Vice President's absence.
- Traditionally, s/he is the longest serving member of the majority party
- President pro tempore is THIRD (follows the Speaker of the House) in line for presidential succession

Tuesday 11/6

- Who are the key leaders in Congress?
What do they do?
- Find out which leaders each party has today
- How is the work of Congress divided among members?
- What are the Congressional committees?

Warm Up

1. Who is **MOST powerful leader** in House?
(Name and position)
2. Who is **MOST powerful leader in the Senate?**
(Name and position)
3. Describe TWO fun facts about the **president pro tempore of the Senate.**
4. What is the Vice President's role in the Senate?
5. Which is the **majority party** in Congress today?

Whips- Each party has one

Whips / Assistant Floor

Leaders

- Are chosen by their party members.
- The party **whips** assist the floor leaders and connect the party's leadership with other members.
- Each party has one whip
- Whips serve in both the House and Senate

Committee Chairmen and

Committee Chairmen Seniority Rule Seniority Rule

- The **committee chairs** are the leaders and most important members of each committee in Congress.
- Are always members of the majority party and are chosen by their party.
- The most important posts will be held by members with the longest service in Congress.
- The head of each committee is often the longest-serving member of the committee from the majority party.



Activity- Who are the current Congressional Leaders?

- Use the sites to find out who the Key Congressional Leaders are today
 - Name
 - Political Party
 - State

SECTION 2

Committees in Congress

- How do the **standing committees** function?
- What are the duties and responsibilities of the **House Rules Committee**?
- What are the functions of **joint** and **conference** committees?



Congress is organized by Committees

- Congress divides its work into committees.
- There are 20 committees in the House and 15 in the Senate
- Members are on several but not ALL committees

Why is Congress organized by committee?

The committee system divides work among members of Congress and makes it manageable.

- Committees allow members of Congress to be more efficient because **work is divided**
- Each members is on **several committees only**; not all committees.
- Congress members become experts in their committee work and rely on others to inform them of work outside their committees

What are the major types of committees?

- 1 Standing
- 2 House Rules Committee
- 3 Select
- 4 Joint
- 5 Conference

1. Standing Committees

- **Standing committees** are permanent and organized by subject matter
- Most handle bills dealing with specific policy matters, such as or foreign relations.
- The majority party always holds a majority of the seats on each of these committees



Permanent Committees of Congress

| Permanent Committees of Congress | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEES | JOINT COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS | SENATE STANDING COMMITTEES |
| Agriculture | Economic | Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry |
| Appropriations | The Library | Appropriations |
| Armed Services | Printing | Armed Services |
| Budget | Taxation | Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs |
| Education and the Workforce | | Budget |
| Energy and Commerce | | Commerce, Science, and Transportation |
| Financial Services | | Energy and Natural Resources |
| Government Reform | | Environment and Public Works |
| House Administration | | Finance |
| International Relations | | Foreign Relations |
| Judiciary | | Governmental Affairs |
| Resources | | Indian Affairs |
| Rules | | Judiciary |
| Science | | Labor and Human Resources |
| Small Business | | Rules and Administration |
| Standards of Official Conduct | | Small Business |
| Transportation and Infrastructure | | Veterans Affairs |
| Veterans Affairs | | |
| Ways and Means | | |



The House Rules Committee and Select Committees

2. The House Rules Committee

- Exists only in the HOUSE
- The Rules Committee decides whether and under what conditions the full House will consider a bill.
- Is the most powerful committee in House, as it can speed, delay, or even prevent action on a bill.

3. The Select Committees

- **Select committees** are temporary and set up to deal with a specific matter (i.e. Watergate; impeachment).
- Many select committees are formed to investigate a current crisis.



Joint and Conference Committees

4. A **joint committee** is one composed of members of both the House and Senate.
5. A **conference committee**—a temporary, joint body—is created to iron out differences between bills passed by the House and Senate before they are sent to the President.



Video Clip- Crash Course US Gov't

- Watch clip on Committees in Congress
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evLR90Dx79M>

Section 2 Review

1. The House Rules Committee

- (a) establishes codes of conduct.
- (b) determines when and under what conditions the full House will consider a measure.
- (c) oversees the execution of bills once they are passed into law.
- (d) determines which members of the Senate may vote on a measure.

2. A conference committee is formed to

- (a) iron out differences in bills passed by the House and Senate before they are sent to the President.
- (b) hold press conferences.
- (c) appoint Supreme Court justices.
- (d) determine rules for debate.

Want to connect to the Magruder's link for this section? [Click Here!](#)



Thursday

Warm-Up- Name the Committee

1. Powerful committee led by the Speaker. Can stop bills before they even start. There is no equivalent committee in the Senate.
2. A type of joint committee used at the end of the legislative process to write the final wording of bills that pass the House & Senate but aren't identical in language.
3. The most important type of committee in the legislative process where most of the work to get a bill passed takes place. Permanent and based on subject matter.
4. Temporary committee set up to investigate, usually.
5. Any committee that has members of both the House and Senate.