**Define bureaucracy.**

A large, complex organization composed of unelected (appointed or hired) officials. It is in a hierarchical structure.

**What is the function of the bureaucracy?**

To carry out policy decisions made by the president and Congress (the main purpose is to complete a specific task specified by Congress and the President)

**What does the Constitution say about the bureaucracy?**

Nothing directly! All it says regarding the administrative system is to allow the president to appoint (with advice and consent of the Senate) "ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the US whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law."

**Why is the bureaucracy so complex?**

Authority is divided among several managers (no one person can make all of the decisions)

**Why are people annoyed with the bureaucracy?**

the size, complexity, and largely because of the political context within which such agencies must operate.

**What are many problems blamed on the bureaucracy a result of?**

What Congress, the courts, and the president do

**What is significant about how the bureaucracy works?**

There is a lot of job specialization (people do what they do, and that is all they do). People have very defined responsibilities.

**What makes American bureaucracy distinctive?**

1. Political authority over the bureaucracy is not in one set of hands but shared among several institutions (it is shared among state and local governments... authority comes from a lot of different places (federalism)).  
2. Most agencies of the federal government share their functions with related agencies in state and local governments.  
3. The institutions and traditions of American life have contributed to the growth of an "adversary culture" where the definition and expansion of personal rights, and the defense of rights and claims through lawsuits and political action, are given central importance.

**Who has authority over the bureaucracy in the federal government? Why?**

**What is significant about the United States government.**

In the US there is a lot of government regulation of private companies, instead of government ownership of private companies.

**What controls does the President have over the bureaucracy?**

He can:  
1. Nominate people to be appointed to a department... Remove people from departments  
2. Shape the direction of the administration  
3. Give directives to an agency of what it needs to accomplish  
4. Reorganize federal departments  
5. Change discretionary spending (but not really mandatory spending)  
6. OBM analyzes and makes suggestions on the President's budget and President can use this as support to cut parts

**What controls does Congress have over the bureaucracy?**

It can:  
1. Confirm nominations made by the president to appoint people to departments  
2. Appropriate money  
3. Create and pass the legislation needed to create these departments  
4. Investigate the administration  
5. Shape the laws that would be executed by that administration

**What constraints does the bureaucracy have on itself?**

It:  
1. Cannot hire, fire, build, sell, etc. without going through extensive procedures  
2. Is more cumbersome and slow compared to small businesses  
3. Congress rarely gives any job to any single agency  
4. It doesn't work like a small business

**The effects of the constraints the bureaucracy has:**

1. The government acts slowly  
2. The government acts inconsistently  
3. It is easier to block legislation than to pass legislation  
4. Low-ranking employees are hesitant to make decisions  
5. The existence of red tape

**These effects:**

do not mean the government is not powerful. The government acts with authority, but it acts inconsistently. They act like that because they have to do some much.

**Why are all the things the bureaucracy has to do in place (including the red tape)?**

A demand of an influential group (everything is there for a reason)

**Appointment is...**

one of the president's most important and difficult tasks

**What concerns does the president have in choosing who to appoint?**

1. Political Ideology (affects how the laws are interpreted)  
2. Personal Character (affects the tone the administration displays)  
3. Competence (affects how effectively the public business is discharged)  
4. Party affiliation (affects how strong the political party/ faction in power will be)

**What is very important when appointing someone?**

Partisanship is important, but COMPETENCE is more important

**What is the patronage power? What are the effects of it?**

Appointing people on the basis of political considerations. It gives the president a way to ensure that his subordinates were reasonably supportive of his polices, provides a reward that the president could use to get disobedient Congressmen to vote for his programs, and enables party organizations to be built up to nominate candidates and get out the vote.

**Who would appointments guided by Congress reward?**

Local supporters of members of Congress or built up local party organizations.

**What is the Spoils System?**

The practice of giving the fruits of a party's victory (such as jobs and contracts) to the loyal members of the party. It is another phrase for political patronage. It is declining, but still existent.

**What are most federal appointments based on today?**

Merit! But many state governments rely heavily on patronage.

**In general, how have wars impacted the bureaucracy?**

They have increased it by making it necessary to hire new officials and create new offices. The restrictions on what administrators can do are partially and sometimes set aside during times of war (this large grant of power usually ends with a war). The number of federal officials does not return to prewar levels after wars.

**What has happened to the number of federal employees?**

The number of civilians working for the federal government has not increased significantly in recent years. This is misleading because the number of people who work indirectly for Washington as employees to private firms and state or local agencies that are largely or entire supported by federal funds has increased (to 13 MILLION)! Most federal bureaucrats and people who work for the federal government live outside of Washington. Employment among federal contractors and consultants and in state and local governments has increased.

**What is the biggest branch of our government?**

The executive branch

**What was the growth in the bureaucracy a result of (from the beginning to the middle of the 19th Century)? What happened after the middle of the 19th Century?**

The growth was a result of the increased demands on its traditional functions (not the result of the government taking on new functions). After the middle of the 19th Century, new agencies were created and many federal employees were added. These new agencies were created to SERVE, not to regulate.

**How do you measure the power of a bureaucracy?**

The extent to which appointed officials have discretionary authority (it cannot be measured by the size of an agency!)

**What is discretionary authority?**

Discretionary authority is the ability to choose courses of action and to make policies that are not spelled out in advance by laws. It allows someone to interpret laws and policies and then enforce them as the person sees fit.

**What three areas of administrative agencies has Congress given substantial authority to?**

1. Paying subsidies to particular groups and organizations in society  
2. Transferring money from the federal government to state and local governments (grant-in-aid programs)  
3. Devising and enforcing regulations for various sectors of society and the economy

**What is competitive service?**

When people are appointed only after they have passed a written exam administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or met certain criteria (such as training, educational attainments, or prior experience) devised by the hiring agency and approved by the OPM. This has recently become decentralized, so each agency now hires its own people without OPM referral, and exams have become less common.

**Why has the competitive service system become decentralized and why has there been a greater use of things other than exams to hire employees?**

1. The old OPM system was cumbersome and often not relevant to the complex needs of departments  
2. These agencies had a need for more professionally trained employees who could not be ranked on the basis of some standard exam  
3. Civil rights groups pressed Washington to make the racial composition of the federal bureaucracy look more like the racial composition of the nation

**What is the excepted service?**

They are employees hired outside of the competitive service (almost half of all workers). They are not hired by the OPM, but they are normally hired in a nonpartisan fashion. Some are hired by agencies that have their own selection procedures. Most are appointed on the grounds of merit.

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**What three patronage powers does the president still have?**

1. Presidential appointments authorized by statue (cabinet and subcabinet officers, judges, US marshals and US attorneys, ambassadors, and members of various boards and commissions).  
2. "Schedule C" appointments to jobs that are described as a "confidential or policy-determining character" below the level of cabinet or subcabinet posts (including executive assistants, special aides, and confidential secretaries).  
3. Non-career executive assignments (NEAs) given to high-ranking members of the regular competitive civil service or to persons brought into the civil service at these high levels. These people are deeply involved in the advocacy of presidential programs or participate in policy-making.

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**Why is it so hard to fire a bureaucrat?**

Because of all the rights they have. It takes so much time and costs so much money to fire someone, there are extensive procedures to go through, and regulations give workers protection (so they can sue). If often takes a year to fire someone.

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**What do federal executives do instead of firing a civil servant?**

They can: deny them promotions, transfer them to undesirable locations, or assign them to meaningless work.

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**How can a career subordinate sabotage or make like miserable for an executive?**

They can delay action, withhold info, follow the rule book with literal exactness, or make an "end run" around a superior to mobilize members of Congress who are sympathetic to the bureaucrat's point of view (or they can talk to the media).

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**What factors might shape the way bureaucrats use their power?**

Personal attributes (such as social class, education, and personal beliefs). The kind of agency a bureaucrat works for makes a difference. Those employed at "activist" agencies are more liberal than those employed at "traditional" agencies. Bureaucrats' policy views tend to reflect the type of government work that they do.

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**What is the typical make up of the federal civil service as a whole?**

It looks like a cross section of American society with regard to education, sex, race, and social origins of its members. Career civil servants are more pro-government than the public at large, but on most specific policy questions, federal bureaucrats do not have extreme positions. Political appointees and career bureaucrats are unrepresentative of the average American. Blacks are heavily represented in the lowest grade levels and underrepresented at the executive level.

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**What is the typical servant like at the higher-ranking levels?**

he is a middle-aged white male with a college degree and a father that is somewhat more advanced than the average citizen. Usually this person is very different from the typical American in background and personal beliefs.

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**What are the effects on policy of the personal make up of the federal civil service?**

They bring their attitudes to work with them. The effects of this depend on how much discretionary authority the person has. The agency takes on someone's personality.

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**What four factors explain the behavior of federal bureaucrats?**

1. The manner in which they are recruited and rewarded  
2. Their personal attributes, such as their socioeconomic backgrounds and their political attitudes  
3. The nature of their jobs  
4. The constraints that outside forces (political superiors, legislators, interest groups, journalists) impose on their agencies.

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**What is a name-request job?**

One that is filled by a person whom an agency has already identified. This happens when a person learns of a job from somebody who already has one, or the head of a bureau decides in advance whom he wishes to hire. Most of the time, this is made available because the bureaucracy knows whom it wishes to hire and wants to circumvent an elaborate search (buddy system).

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**Civil Service Reform Act of 1978**

Congress recognized that many high-level positions in the civil service have important policy-making responsibilities and that the president and his cabinet officers should have more flexibility in recruiting, assigning, and paying these people. It created the Senior Executive Service (SES) which had 8,000 top federal managers that could (in theory) be hired, fired, and transferred more easily than ordinary civil servants. SES members would be eligible for substantial cash bonuses, and anyone who was removed from the SES was guaranteed a job somewhere else in government.

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**Who are most government agencies dominated by?**

People who have not served in any other agency and who have been in government service most of their lives.

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**What is the civil service system?**

A system of hiring and promoting employees that is designed to eliminate political influence, nepotism, and bias, by hiring people based on merit (CREATED BY the Pendleton Act)

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**What are client politics?**

The type of politics where an organized minority or an interest group benefits at the expense of the public

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**How can bureaucrats sabotage their political bosses?**

They can: leak info to the media and Congress, use the pathologies of the bureaucracy using procedures in place to make things long and drawn out, tell and interest group what will harm and hurt their agency the most, drag their heels if they don't like their bosses, leak embarrassing stories to Congress or the media, help interest groups mobilize against the agency head, and discover a thousand procedural reasons why a new course of action will not work.

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**Do bureaucrats usually try to sabotage their bosses? Why or why not?**

No, because they are loyal and also civil servants do not have a lot of discretionary authority and therefore cannot sabotage. Since most civil servants have highly structured jobs, there is not a lot of leeway and room to let their personal attitudes affect their work. A lot of civil servants perform tasks that are: routinized, closely defined by laws and rules, or closely monitored by others.

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**What constraints are on agencies?**

They cannot hire, fire, build, or sell without going through extensive procedures set down in laws; how much money an agency pays its members is determined by statute; the goals of an agency and its exact procedures are spelled out by Congress; and Congress rarely gives any job to a single agency.

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**What are the effects of these constraints?**

1. The government will often act slowly  
2. The government will sometimes act inconsistently  
3. It will be easier to block action than to take action  
4. Lower ranking employees will be reluctant to make decisions on their own  
5. Citizens will complain of red tape

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**Why are there so many constraints?**

1. Government agencies behave like they do largely because of the many different goals they must pursue and the complex rules they must follow. These constraints COME FROM US.  
2. Every goal, every constraint, and every bit of red tape was put in place by Congress, the courts, the White House, or the agency itself responding to the demands of some influential faction.  
3. A lot of people don't trust the government, so they insist that everything the government does is done in the sunshine, with no secrets, closed meetings, or hidden files.

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**What is the culture of an agency? How do you determine it?**

The culture of an agency is made up of the informal understandings among fellow employees as to how they are supposed to act. You can tell the culture of an agency by determining which jobs you should take there to get ahead (which jobs have the potentials for promotions)... Career enhancing jobs are part of the culture.

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**Freedom of Information Act (1966)**

Citizens have the right to inspect all government records except those containing military, intelligence, or trade secrets or revealing private personnel actions.

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**National Environmental Policy Act (1969)**

Before undertaking any major action affecting the environment, an agency must issue and environmental impact statement.

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**Pendleton Act (1883)**

Begun a slow but steady transfer of federal jobs from the patronage to the merit system. It was made possible to pass because: (1) public outrage over the abuses of the spoils system and (2) the fear that if the Democrats came to power over anti-spoils sentiment, existing Republican officeholders would be fired

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**Laissez-faire Economics**

An economic theory that government should not regulate or interfere with commerce

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**16th Amendment**

Gives Congress the power to lay and collect income taxes

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**Office of Personnel Management**

An independent agency that manages the civil service of the federal government. It administers written exams for federal officials who belong to the competitive service.

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**Hatch Act (1933 and 1993)**

1993: prohibits federal employees from engaging in certain political activities (running partisan elections, making or soliciting political contributions, influencing elections, running for office as a member of a political party, etc...)  
1993: Allow most federal employees to take an active part in partisan political management and partisan political campaigns.

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**Whistle Blower Protection Act (1989)**

Protects the exercise of some bureaucratic powers. This law created the Office of Special Counsel to investigate complains from bureaucrats that they were punished after reporting to Congress about waste, fraud, or abuse in their agencies.

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**Committee Clearance**

The ability of a congressional committee to review and approve certain agency decisions in advance and without passing a law. This approval is not legally binding on the agency, but few agency heads will ignore the expressed wishes of committees.

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**What is an iron triangle?**

A close relationship between an agency, a congressional committee, and an interest group that often becomes a mutually advantageous alliance.

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**What is an iron triangle an example of?**

Client politics

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**What is an issue network?**

A network of people in Washington-based interest groups, on congressional staffs, in universities and think tanks, and in the mass media who regularly discuss and advocate public policies. These networks are split among political, ideological, and economic lines.

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**What has happened to the numbers of iron triangles and issue networks? Why?**

The number of iron triangles has decreased; issue networks have increased. The number of iron triangles have decreased because:  
1. The number and variety of interest groups have increased so much in recent years that there is scarcely any agency that is not subject to pressures from several competing interests instead of only from one powerful interest.  
2. The growth of subcommittees in Congress has meant that most agencies are subject to control by many different legislative groups, often with different concerns.  
3. The courts have made it much easier for all kinds of individuals and interests to intervene in agency affairs.  
  
(Basically, politics has become more COMPLICATED)

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**What are examples of Congressional supervision over the bureaucracy?**

1. No agency may exist (except for a few presidential offices and commissions) without congressional approval, so Congress influences/ determines agency behavior by the statutes it enacts.  
2. No money may be spent unless it has first been authorized by Congress. Authorization legislation originates in a legislative committee and states the maximum amount of money that an agency may spend on a given program (permanent, for a fixed number of years, or annual)  
3. Even funds that have been authorized by Congress cannot be spent unless they are also appropriated. Appropriations originate with the House Appropriations Committee (not with the legislative committees).  
4. Legislative Veto (unconstitutional now)  
5. INVESTIGATIONS! (sometimes constructive, sometimes destructive... upheld by the Supreme Court... so they can stop giving an agency money... it gives Congress a more educated opinion)

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**Why is it so hard to reform the bureaucracy?**

Because of the struggle for control of the bureaucracy between the president and Congress (which is even worse during a divided government... affects implementing policy)! There is a lot of red tape so the bureaucracy can avoid getting in trouble and bureaucrats do not want to irritate either branch.

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**What are the five bureaucratic pathologies?**

1. Red Tape   
2. Conflict  
3. Duplication  
4. Imperialism  
5. Waste

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**Why do the bureaucratic pathologies exist?**

What is done to fix some problems will often make other problems worse. Most exist because the very NATURE OF GOVERNMENT itself.

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**Senatorial Courtesy**

A custom where presidential appointments are confirmed only if there is no objection to them by the senators from the appointee's state, especially from the senior senator of the president's party from that state.

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**What is a complication concerning the federal bureaucracy?**

The Constitution only vaguely mentions the president's power to appoint executives to departments

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**Governmental hiring practices exemplify the need for...**

Proceeding on the basis of merit, satisfying strict accounting rules, and allowing for citizen access.  
NOT: encouraging partisan politics

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**What is the fundamental source of power for the bureaucracy?**

The ability to set specific guidelines after receiving a general mandate from Congress (discretionary authority)