5.6 Congress in Practice: Committees, Incumbency and Relations with the Presidency: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short-answer questions may be brief phrases but extended answers must be in full sentences.

1 State one function of standing committees in the US Congress, in the context of legislation and oversight.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 Define the term 'cloture' as it operates in the United States Senate procedural practice.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Explain how Senate confirmation hearings can be used as a form of congressional oversight of the President.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

4 Identify two factors that contribute to the incumbency effect for US members of the House of Representatives.

(a) Identify one factor contributing to incumbency advantage in the US House context. **(1)**

(b) Identify a second factor contributing to incumbency advantage in the US House context. **(1)**

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

---

5 Explain two ways a committee chair can influence whether a bill progresses to a floor vote in the US House or Senate.

(a) Explain one way a committee chair can influence bill progression. **(1)**

(b) Explain a second way a committee chair can influence bill progression. **(1)**

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

6 State two congressional powers or practices that check the President through the confirmation process, in the US context.

(a) State one congressional practice that checks presidential appointments. **(1)**

(b) State a second congressional power that checks presidential appointments. **(2)**

(Total for Question 6 is 3 marks)

---

7 Explain two distinct stages in the US Congress impeachment process and the role each chamber plays, as a means of oversight of the President.

(a) Explain the first stage of impeachment in the US House of Representatives. **(2)**

(b) Explain the second stage of impeachment in the Senate and its role. **(2)**

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Mark scheme · 5.6 Congress in Practice: Committees, Incumbency and Relations with the Presidency: Test Pack

Question 1

one accurate function, e.g. conducting detailed scrutiny of proposed bills and amending legislation **B1**

Answer: Scrutinising and amending proposed legislation in detail.

Question 2

a concise definition of cloture, e.g. a procedure to end debate and overcome a filibuster by a specified supermajority vote **B1**

Answer: A Senate procedure to end debate and overcome a filibuster by securing the required supermajority vote to proceed to a final vote.

Question 3

identifies that Senate confirmation hearings allow detailed public questioning of nominees **B1**

identifies that committees can investigate nominees' records and demand documents **B1**

identifies that Senators can use hearings to signal policy priorities and to delay or weaken a nomination **B1**

explains the oversight effect, e.g. hearings can constrain the President by making confirmations politically costly or time-consuming **B1**

Answer: Senate confirmation hearings provide a public forum to question nominees and examine their records; committees can demand documents and probe suitability; senators use hearings to signal priorities and to delay or block nominees, which constrains the President by making appointments politically costly or slow.

Question 4

(a) one accurate factor, e.g. name recognition **B1**

(a) Answer: Name recognition among voters.

(b) one accurate factor, e.g. incumbents' ability to raise campaign funds more easily **B1**

(b) Answer: Easier fundraising and access to campaign finance networks.

Question 5

(a) identifies a method, e.g. controlling the committee agenda and scheduling hearings **B1**

(a) Answer: By controlling the committee agenda and scheduling hearings, a chair can decide whether and when a bill is examined.

(b) identifies a method, e.g. influencing the content via amendment and markup of the bill text **B1**

(b) Answer: By steering amendments and markup sessions, the chair can shape the bill's content and viability before it reaches the floor.

Question 6

(a) one accurate practice, e.g. Senate committee hearings for nominees **B1**

(a) Answer: Senate committee hearings to examine presidential nominees.

(b) identifies the Senate's constitutional power to confirm or reject nominees **B1**

(b) development, e.g. rejection or withholding of confirmation blocks appointments **B1**

(b) Answer: The Senate has the constitutional power to confirm or reject presidential nominees, and a Senate majority can withhold confirmation to block appointments.

Question 7

(a) identifies the House's role in investigating alleged misconduct and passing articles of impeachment **B1**

(a) development, e.g. a simple majority in the House is required to adopt articles of impeachment **B1**

(a) Answer: The House investigates alleged misconduct and may draft and vote on articles of impeachment; a simple majority in the House is required to adopt one or more articles of impeachment.

(b) identifies the Senate's role in holding a trial on the articles of impeachment **B1**

(b) development, e.g. a two-thirds Senate majority is required to convict and remove an official **B1**

(b) Answer: The Senate holds a trial on the articles of impeachment and, if it convicts by a two-thirds majority, can remove the official; conviction and removal require a higher threshold than the House vote.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk