**IV. Congress, Social Policy, The Budget**

A. **Objective**- *Article I of the Constitution delegate’s formal and informal legislative powers to the halls of Congress. This institution balances its power with the executive and judicial branches of government, an intricate balance that evolves and changes over time. The issue of divided government promotes a process that often can lead from legislative gridlock to true non-partisanship in dealing with numerous policy issues including how to establish a national budget and develop social policy. The student will:*

1. Understand the powers of Congress.

2. Determine the make-up of the current House and Senate.

3. Analyze how Congress and the President undertake the arduous task of developing an

annual budget.

4. Evaluate how social policy impacts policy-making decisions.

**B. Terminal Concepts:**

**1. incumbents 2. pork barrel spending**

**3. bicameral legislature 4. House Rules Committee**

**5. filibuster 6. Speaker of the House**

**7. majority leader 8. whips**

**9. minority leader 10. standing committee**

**11. joint committee 12. conference committees**

**13. select committees 14. legislative oversight**

**15. committee chairs 16. seniority system**

**17. caucus 18. bill**

**19. budget 20. deficit**

**21. expenditures 22. revenues**

**23. income tax 24. Sixteenth Amendment**

**25. federal debt 26. tax expenditures**

**27. Social Security Act 28. Medicare**

**29. incrementalism 30. uncontrollable expenditures**

**31. entitlements 32. House Ways + Means Committee**

**33. Senate Finance Committee 34. Discharge Petition**

**35. Congressional Budget + Impoundment Control Act of 1974**

**36. Congressional Budget Office (CBO) 37. budget resolution**

**38. authorization bill 39. appropriation bill**

**40. Legislative veto 41. TANF**

**42. Welfare Reform Act of 1996 43. Transfer payments**

**44. Progressive tax 45. Flat Tax**

**46. Office of Management and Budget 47. Means tested (Medicaid/welfare)**

**48. Baker v. Carr (1961) 49. Shaw v. Reno (1993)**

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**Chapter 7: Congress**

1. List the qualifications for service in the House of Representatives and the US Senate
2. Describe how the Apportionment and redistricting process works.
3. What are the powers of Congress? Where are these found? Explain how the elastic clause interpreted loosely adds significantly to these powers.
4. Differentiate between the Senate and the House of Representatives in both structure and powers. Make sure you note the differences with regards to Rules Committee, Filibusters, and appropriations bills.
5. Describe the organizational structure of the House of Representatives including the role of the Speaker, Majority and Minority leaders, and whips.
6. Describe the organizational structure of the Senate and how the filibuster creates a need for supermajorities in Senate deliberations over legislation and confirmations.
7. Describe the four types of Congressional committees and determine their functions. Provide an example for each

* Standing
* Joint
* Conference
* Select

1. What is impeachment? What roles do the House and Senate play in the process? Which presidents have been impeached and how close were they from being removed from office?
2. Define pork, earmarking, and logrolling. What do these terms influence members of Congress?
3. Explain the multiple reasons why incumbents usually win elections.
4. Describe the different theories of representation for members of Congress.
5. Describe in detail the process by which a bill becomes a law.

13. How did the cases of Baker v. Carr (1961) and Shaw v. Reno (1993) deal with the issue of Congressional redistricting?

**Chapter 17: Domestic Policy/Social Welfare**

1. What policy areas does domestic policy include?

2. What is an entitlement program? Provide examples of these. How much of the annual budget to entitlement programs take up?

3. Why does social service spending continue to rise?

4. Compare and contrast Medicare and Medicaid.

5. Why are many components of social service spending considered to be “uncontrollable expenditures”?

6. Is the income distribution across America, even or unequal?

7. What is the poverty line for individuals and families?

8. How did the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act reform change welfare policies?

**Chapter 18: Economic Policy**

1. What is the purpose of a budget?

2. What are sources of Federal revenue?

3. What is a deficit? How is that different from a debt? What is the current U.S. debt?

4. What are the top three expenditures for the federal government?

5. Who establishes the budgetary agenda? When is it released publically?

6. How did the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974 impact the budgetary process?

7. What is the Federal Reserve? Describe some of the tools that the Federal Reserve Board has to manipulate monetary policy in the United States.

8. What are the stages of the budget process? How are funds allocated to different policy areas (i.e. how much goes to the military, to education, etc.)? How is the OMB involved?