

**Political Science 517N**  
**Mr. Anderson**  
**February 12, 2001**  
**Midterm Exam**

**Short Answer Essay—Answer Five Questions (50 points)**

1. Richard Fenno and David Mayhew offer perspectives on the goals of members of Congress. What are these goals? Which goal(s) is more important than the others? Members of Congress often have long congressional careers. Which goal or goals are most important early in the congressional career? How do you think this changes across the congressional career?
2. In class we discussed many different types of representation. Tell me what these representation types are, define them, and then give one example of each, indicating how it fits with your definitions.
3. Sinclair describes “unorthodox lawmaking” in her online chapter readings. Describe the steps associated with “ordinary lawmaking”—tell me each step in the ordinary lawmaking process and describe the possible “happenings” in each stage. Then, provide an example of “unorthodox lawmaking” at each of the stages you describe. You may use either the House or Senate in your discussion.
4. The Founding Fathers created the legislative branch “of and for the people.” Explain what this means, how our government achieves it, and why the Founders built our government in this particular manner.
5. Kingdon suggests that agenda-setting in government requires a number of steps to be realized. Explain what these steps are, using his “streams” analogy to guide you. How do sudden or exogenous triggering events affect agenda-setting (be sure to define or explain exogenous/trigger events)?
6. Woodrow Wilson said that “Congress at work is Congress in committees.” Explain what Wilson means, indicating your knowledge of the purposes of committees. What theories exist to explain the role of the committee system? Briefly make an argument in favor of one of these perspectives.
7. We spent a good deal of time talking about parties and leadership. Briefly tell me who makes up the leadership of the majority and minority parties. Indicate, again briefly, what their roles are. Finally, provide a short argument (with supporting evidence) **against** this statement: “The majority party doesn’t have as much power as everyone thinks it does.” Use our in-class discussion of parties and leadership to justify your argument.
8. Incumbents win more often than challengers. In a short essay, tell me why this is the case using evidence from the lecture and your readings.

### Long Answer Essay—Answer One (25 points)

1. Members of Congress face enormous pressures when making public policy. This is particularly true when they vote on the floor of the House or Senate. Explain what these pressures are, providing evidence from your readings and lecture that support your assertions. Which of these influences is the most important? Why? Which is least important? Why?

Now imagine yourself to be a member of Congress. You are voting on the McCain-Feingold campaign finance bill, a bill that bans soft money donations, limits independent expenditures prior to the election (expenditures by groups but using the candidate's name), and expands the financial disclosure candidates must provide. Which of the voting influences you listed above would be relevant here? That is, what forces would attempt to influence you and why? Which one(s) would be the most important to you—justify your choice.

2. One often hears talk about the idea of term limits—that having them will provide us with a more active, responsive government that can “break gridlock” and actually get things done. But our discussion in class suggests that government does get something done.

Using evidence from the class and from your readings, discuss whether or not Congress is responsive to the citizenry when it comes to the generation of public policy. You should discuss general responsiveness as well as specific cases during the legislative process where the member of Congress is especially responsive (agenda setting, legislative stage, etc.)

You should discuss whether this responsiveness is as the Founders wanted—was the Constitution written such that members of Congress could change the law quickly, or was it written to encourage deliberation and careful forethought? How do the trends we observe in public policy-making mirror or oppose the vision the Founders had?

Finally, talk a bit about term limits. Will term limits make the legislative institution more or less responsive? Justify your answer by integrating our discussion of seniority, experience, and the like. Will term limits encourage public policy that is more flexible and practical, or will it actually generate bills and laws that will need to be quickly changed as times change?