Magruder’s American Government

CHAPTER 15
Government at Work: The Bureaucracy
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SECTION 1

The Federal Bureaucracy

• What is a bureaucracy?

• What are the major elements of the federal bureaucracy?

• How are groups within the federal bureaucracy named?

• What is the difference between a staff agency and a line agency?
What Is a Bureaucracy?

Three features distinguish bureaucracies:

• *Hierarchical authority.* Bureaucracies are based on a pyramid structure with a chain of command running from top to bottom.

• *Job specialization.* Each *bureaucrat*, or person who works for the organization, has certain defined duties and responsibilities.

• *Formalized rules.* The bureaucracy does its work according to a set of established regulations and procedures.
Major Elements of the Federal Bureaucracy

• The federal bureaucracy is all of the agencies, people, and procedures through which the Federal Government operates.

• The President is the **chief administrator** of the Federal Government.

• The government’s many administrators and agencies are part of an **administration** which enacts and enforce policy.
The Name Game

- The name *department* is reserved for agencies of the Cabinet rank.

- Common titles for lesser units include *agency, administration, commission, corporation, and authority.*

![Seals of various U.S. government agencies](image)
Staff Agencies

- **Staff agencies** serve in a support capacity.
- They aid the chief executive and other administrators by offering advice and other assistance in the management of the organization.

Line Agencies

- **Line agencies** perform tasks for which the organization exists.
- Congress and the President give the line agencies goals to accomplish, and staff agencies help the line agencies accomplish them.
Section 1 Review

1. All of the following are characteristics of bureaucracies EXCEPT
   (a) hierarchical authority.
   (b) formalized rules.
   (c) lack of formal organization.
   (d) job specialization.

2. Staff agencies are created to
   (a) act as congressional watchdogs on executive agencies.
   (b) aid other agencies in completing their goals.
   (c) serve as a check on the Supreme Court.
   (d) fulfill a specific task or function.
The Executive Office of the President

• What is the Executive Office of the President?

• What are the duties of the White House Office and the National Security Council?

• What are the additional agencies in the Executive Office of the President that assist the President?
The Executive Office of the President (the EOP) serves as the President’s right arm, staffed by most of the President’s closest advisors and assistants.

The EOP was established by Congress in 1939.

Why? What’s happening in America that would cause the President to think he needs more help?
The White House Office

• The White House Office is comprised of the President’s key personal and political staff including –
  • Chief of Staff
  • assistants to the President
  • press secretary
  • counsel to the President
  • the President’s physician.
The National Security Council

• The National Security Council (NSC) acts to advise the President on all domestic, foreign, and military matters that relate to the nation’s security.

• Members include the Vice President and the secretaries of state and defense.
The President's closest advisors work in the West Wing of the White House, near the oval office.
Additional Agencies

Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

- The OMB’s major task is the preparation of the federal budget, which the President must submit to Congress.

Office of National Drug Control Policy

- Established in 1989, this agency’s existence dramatizes the nation’s concern over drugs.

Council of Economic Advisers

- The Council of Economic Advisers consists of three of the country’s leading economists, and acts as the President’s major source of information and advice on the nation’s economy.
Section 2 Review

1. All of the following are correct about the Executive Office of the President (the EOP) EXCEPT that the EOP
   (a) is an umbrella agency consisting of several agencies.
   (b) serves as the right arm to the President.
   (c) acts as a body of equal power to the President.
   (d) aids the President in his execution of federal power.

2. The National Security Council serves as
   (a) the President’s advisory board on all matters of national security.
   (b) a watchdog commission for the Central Intelligence Agency.
   (c) the civilian command component of the military.
   (d) none of the above.

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Section 3
The Executive Departments

• What are the origins of the executive departments, and how did they develop?
• How are members of the Cabinet chosen?
• What role does the Cabinet play in the President’s decisions?
The executive departments, often called the Cabinet departments, are the traditional units of federal administration.

Each department is headed by a secretary, except for the attorney general who heads the Department of Justice.
The Cabinet

- By tradition, the heads of the executive departments form the **Cabinet** - an informal advisory body who serves the President.

- Cabinet secretaries are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

- Cabinet members serve as both head of their respective departments and as advisors to the President.
President Obama’s Cabinet

Department of Agriculture
Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack
www.usda.gov

Department of Commerce
Acting Secretary Rebecca M. Blank
www.doc.gov

Department of Defense
Secretary Leon Panetta
www.defenselink.mil

Department of Education
Secretary Arne Duncan
www.ed.gov
President Obama’s Cabinet

Department of Energy
Secretary Steven Chu
www.energy.gov

Department of Health & Human Services
Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
www.hhs.gov

Department of Homeland Security
Secretary Janet A. Napolitano
www.dhs.gov

Department of Housing & Urban Development
Secretary Shaun L.S. Donovan
www.hud.gov
President Obama’s Cabinet

**Department of the Interior**
Secretary Kenneth L. Salazar
www.doi.gov

**Department of Labor**
Secretary Hilda L. Solis
www.dol.gov

**Department of Justice**
Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.
www.usdoj.gov

**Department of State**
Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton
www.state.gov
President Obama’s Cabinet

Department of Transportation
Secretary Raymond L. LaHood
www.dot.gov

Department of the Treasury
Secretary Timothy F. Geithner
www.ustreas.gov

Department of Veterans Affairs
Secretary Eric K. Shinseki
www.va.gov
Section 3 Review

1. All heads of the executive departments are known as secretaries except for the
   (a) head of the Department of Justice—the attorney general.
   (b) head of the Department of Defense—the supreme general.
   (c) head of the Department of the Treasury—the treasurer.
   (d) chief of the Department of the Interior—the forest ranger.

2. Members of the Cabinet act as heads of their departments as well as
   (a) advisors to the President.
   (b) congressional liaisons.
   (c) heads of the branches of the armed forces.
   (d) none of the above.

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Independent Agencies

• Why does the government create independent agencies?
• What are the characteristics of independent executive agencies and independent regulatory commissions?
• How are government corporations structured?
The **independent agencies** are created by Congress and located outside the executive departments.

Independent agencies have been formed for numerous reasons, including:

- being assigned a task or function that does not fit well within the existing departmental structure;
- protecting the agency’s purposes from the influence of both partisan and pressure politics;
- being created outside the departmental structure by accident.
The Independent Executive Agencies

- The **independent executive agencies** include most of the independent agencies.

- The most important difference between the independent executive agencies and the 16 executive departments is that they simply do not have Cabinet status.

- Examples of independent executive agencies include NASA, the CIA, and the EPA.

- Some independent executive agencies are far from well-known, such as the Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee.
The Tough Questions

Young Elvis by Mark Stutzman

Old Elvis by John Barkey

And the winner is . . .
Independent Regulatory Commissions

• The **independent regulatory commissions** stand out among the independent agencies because they are largely beyond the reach of presidential direction and control.

• Term length of members and staggering of member appointments keep these commissions from falling under control of one party.

• The regulatory commissions are **quasi-legislative** and **quasi-judicial**, meaning that Congress has given them certain legislative-like and judicial-like powers.
The Government Corporations

- **Government corporations** are also within the executive branch and subject to the President’s direction and control.

- Government corporations were established by Congress to carry out certain **business-like activities**.

- There are now over 50 government corporations, including the U.S. Postal Service, Amtrak, and the Tennessee Valley Authority.
1. Independent agencies are formed for all of the following reasons EXCEPT
   (a) to create an agency immune from the system of checks and balances.
   (b) their function pertains to a peculiar or sensitive task.
   (c) their function does not fit within the structure of the executive departments.
   (d) keeping their function out of the influence of partisan or pressure politics.

2. The U.S. Postal Service is an example of
   (a) an independent regulatory commission.
   (b) a Cabinet department.
   (c) an independent executive agency.
   (d) a government corporation.

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The Civil Service

• How did the civil service develop?
• What are the characteristics of the current civil service?
• What restrictions are placed on the political activity of members of the civil service?
The **civil service** is that group of public employees who perform the administrative work of government, excluding the armed forces.

- **Patronage** – the practice of giving government jobs to supporters and friends.

- Also known as the **Spoils System**

- After the assassination of President Garfield, Congress passed the **Pendleton Act** in 1883. This law set **merit**, not connections as the basis for hiring in most civil service positions.
Garfield Assassination - 1881

James Garfield

Charles Guiteau
The Civil Service Today

- The **Office of Personnel Management** is the central clearinghouse in the federal recruiting, examining, and hiring process.
- The **Merit Systems Protection Board** enforces the merit principle in the federal bureaucracy.
- Congress sets the pay and other job conditions for everyone who works for the Federal Government, except for postal employees.

Profile of Civil Service Employees

- **Gender**:
  - Women 44%
  - Men 56%

- **Ethnic Background**:
  - Non-Hispanic Caucasian 71.3%
  - Native American 2.1%
  - Asian/Pacific Islander 4.5%
  - African American 16.7%
  - Hispanic 6.4%

- **Education**:
  - No Bachelor's Degree 60%
  - Bachelor's Degree or Higher 40%

- **Job Category**:
  - Blue-Collar 13%
  - White-Collar 87%

SOURCE: Office of Personnel Management. Numbers represent the executive branch agencies, both white and blue collar. Postal work force excluded.
Several laws and a number of OPM regulations place restrictions on the political activities of federal civil servants:

- Federal employees are forbidden from:
  1. running in partisan elections;
  2. engaging in party work on government property or while on the job;
  3. collecting political contributions from subordinates or the general public; or
  4. using a government position to influence an election.

(These restrictions are described in two laws: The Hatch Act of 1939 and Federal Employees Political Activities Act of 1993.)
1. The Pendleton Act established
   (a) that the Supreme Court would regulate personnel decisions.
   (b) that any U.S. citizen was guaranteed a civil service job.
   (c) merit as the basis for hiring and other personnel actions in the civil service.
   (d) the basis of the spoils system.

2. The function of the Office of Personnel Management is to
   (a) aid in the staffing of civil service positions through civil service tests and other means.
   (b) establish workplace safety standards.
   (c) regulate the hiring practices of private American companies.
   (d) ensure that political patronage continues to be the standard for employment in the civil service.

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