

Chapter 10: Congress

Section 3

Lecture Notes



AMERICAN
GOVERNMENT

PEARSON

► Objectives

1. Compare the size of the Senate to the size of the House of Representatives.
2. Describe how senators are elected.
3. Explain how and why a senator's term differs from a representative's term.
4. Describe the qualifications for election to the Senate.

▶ Key Terms

- **continuous body:** a political body in which all of the seats are never up for election at the same time
- **constituency:** the people and interests represented by a politician

- How does the Senate differ from the House?
 - The Senate has only **100 members**, two from each state.
 - Members are elected to **six-year terms**.
 - Senators must be at least **30 years old**, have been a **U.S. citizen** for at least nine years, and **reside in the state** they represent.
 - Senators are often seen as less subject to public pressure and more concerned about national issues than members of the House.

► Structure of the Senate

- The size of the Senate changes as new states are admitted to the Union.
 - The Senate began with 22 members in 1789.
- Senators tend to represent a much larger and broader range of citizens than representatives.
 - Each Senator represents his or her entire state, while only seven representatives are elected at large from their entire state as opposed to a congressional district.

▶ The Millionaires' Club

- Senators were originally elected by state legislatures rather than by popular vote.
 - In the late 1880s, the Senate was called the Millionaires' Club because legislatures often elected wealthy political party and business leaders.

▶ The 17th Amendment

- Checkpoint: How were senators chosen before and after the passage of the 17th Amendment?
 - In 1913, the 17th amendment changed the way Senators were elected.
 - Senators are now elected by popular vote in statewide elections.
 - Only one senator is elected from a state during any given election.

▶ Senate Terms

- There are **no limits** on how many six-year terms a Senator can serve.
- Senate **terms are staggered** so that one third of them expire every two years.
 - All the seats in the Senate are never up for election at the same time.
- If a senator dies, resigns, or is expelled, they are typically replaced by a person appointed by the governor of their state until a special election can be held.

▶ A Unique Role

- Senators are thought of as being more focused on national issues and are more likely to be seen as national political leaders than members of the House. Why?
 - Due to their longer terms in office, Senators are seen as less susceptible than representatives to the pressures of public opinion
 - Senators represent larger and more diverse constituencies than representatives in the House, and can champion public policies that appeal to many Americans.

▶ National Recognition

- Senators receive more national and home state media exposure than members of the House,
- Senators often use this publicity to help them launch presidential campaigns.



► Senators: Policy and Prestige

- Senators are Washington celebrities - members of what is often called “the world’s most exclusive club.”
- Their names are frequently household words and their activities draw media coverage that allows them to call attention to issues that they deem important.
- Many senators use the spotlight to launch presidential campaigns.



► Qualifications

- Senators must meet a stricter set of requirements for office than members of the House of Representatives.
- The Framers set these requirements, as well as the longer terms in office, because they wanted the Senate to be a more enlightened and responsible legislative body than the House.



Senator Edward Kennedy (D., Mass)

► Informal Qualifications

- To be electable, senators must also meet informal qualifications.
 - These can include party affiliation, gender, ethnicity, name recognition, and being an incumbent.
- Fundraising is also vital for successful senate campaigns.



"According to our estimates, a campaign budget around six point two million is needed to successfully sing your praises."

- **Analyzing Political Cartoons** In this cartoon, a campaign manager talks to a candidate. **What clues in the cartoon tell you where this is taking place and who the characters may be?**

▶ Senate Discipline

- The Senate has the power to discipline its members or refuse to seat an elected member.
 - The Senate can expel a member with a two thirds vote or punish them with a majority vote.
 - The Senate has expelled 15 members, most of them senators who supported secession during the Civil War.
 - The threat of expulsion or the embarrassment of being publicly denounced by the Ethics Committee has led some senators to resign.

► Review

- Now that you have learned how the Senate differs from the House, go back and answer the Chapter Essential Question.
 - Whose views should members of Congress represent when voting?