

AP GOV

THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY

REVIEWED!

Government in America (Pearson) Chapter 14

American Government: (Wilson) Chapter 15
Institutions & Policies

THE BUREAUCRACY

The **government bureaucracy** is an organization of non-elected government officials who fulfill the functions of their particular agency

— Job is to **carry out the responsibilities of the federal government**

- Implement laws passed by Congress & EO of President
- Develop and enforce rules and regulations
- Administer government programs

— This objective is performed by:

- Agencies
- Commissions
- Departments
- Government corporations

TABLE 14.1 FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT

Executive Departments	Number of Employees*
Defense (military functioned)	703,100
Veterans Affairs	221,400
Homeland Security	188,800
Justice	111,600
Treasury	108,800
Agriculture	90,800
Health and Human Services	76,800
Interior	69,900
Transportation	58,800
Commerce	45,100
State	33,300
Labor	17,900
Energy	16,900
Housing and Urban Development	9,900
Education	4,100

TABLE 14.1 FEDERAL CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT

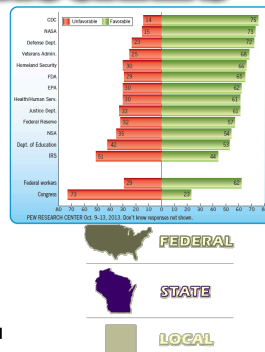
Larger Noncabinet Agencies	Number of Employees*
U.S. Postal Service	558,300
Social Security Administration	64,100
Corps of Engineers	23,300
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	17,600
Environmental Protection Agency	15,400
Department of Veterans Affairs	12,800
General Services Administration	13,100

*Figures are for 2015.
Source: Bureau of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2016 Analytical Perspectives Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2016, Tables 8.2 and 8.3.

THE BUREAUCRATS

Bureaucratic Myths & Realities

- Americans dislike bureaucrats
 - Citizens and elected officials dislike “faceless” bureaucracies
 - Too much “red tape”, ineffective, inefficient
 - But majority of citizens report **favorable interactions** with various bureaucratic agencies
- Bureaucracies are increasing
 - Federal bureaucracy is shrinking, but **state and local bureaucracies have grown**
- Bureaucrats work in D.C.
 - Most work at the state or local level



CIVIL SERVANTS

- Distinction:
 - **Patronage**: system in which hiring and promotions are based upon political factors
 - **Merit**: system in which hiring and promotions are based skill and talent
- Back in the day: **Patronage system**
 - Job not based upon merit- “spoils system”
- **Civil Service System**: pass exam(s) and promotions are based upon merit/performance
 - **Pendleton Act (1883)**: created federal civil service
 - **Hatch Act (1939)**: prohibits civil servants from engaging in political activities
 - Merit based professional civil service help the “effectiveness of the bureaucracy by promoting professionalism, specialization, and neutrality.”
- Patronage jobs have not completely disappeared
 - Newly elected presidents fill thousands of executive positions (**Political appointees**)
- Civil servants are relatively protected from being fired for political reasons and often outlasts political appointees and elected officials.



ORGANIZATION OF THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY

Four types of bureaucratic federal agencies:

- 1) Cabinet Departments
 - 2) Independent Regulatory Commissions
 - 3) Government Corporations
 - 4) Independent Executive Agencies
- Cabinet Departments:
 - 15 different depts.
 - Secretary of each department is appointed by the President
 - Bureaus within the department
 - Independent Regulatory Commissions:
 - Make and enforce the rules in the public interest
 - Alphabet soup of government agencies:
 - FCC (Federal Communications Commission)
 - SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission)
 - Government Corporations:
 - Provide services to citizens that could be dealt with by the private sector
 - Examples:
 - TVA: electricity to rural areas
 - U.S. Postal Service
 - Independent Executive Agencies:
 - Any agency that is not one of the above
 - Examples: EPA, NASA, CIA

BUREAUCRACIES AS IMPLEMENTORS

- Congress passes the laws and • The President ensures the laws are faithfully executed
- The bureaucracy implement the policies by working out the details
 - Create a new agency or assign responsibility to an existing agency
 - Develop rules and guidelines
 - Coordinate resources to ensure successful implementation
- **Discretionary authority**: the ability of an agency to choose a course of action and set policies
- Implementation can be difficult
 - Lack of clarity
 - Lack of resources
 - Funding
 - Personnel
 - Lack of authority
 - Standard operating procedures
 - Fragmentation



BUREAUCRACIES AS IMPLEMENTORS

“Discretionary and rule-making authority to implement policy are given to bureaucratic departments, agencies, and commissions, such as:”

- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Education
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Elections Commission (FEC)
- Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)



PRIVATIZATION

- Move towards reinventing the government began in the 1980s
 - Decentralize authority – devolution: power shift from fed to states
 - More jobs previously done by public employees transferred to the private sector
 - Problems remain

BUREAUCRACIES AS REGULATORS

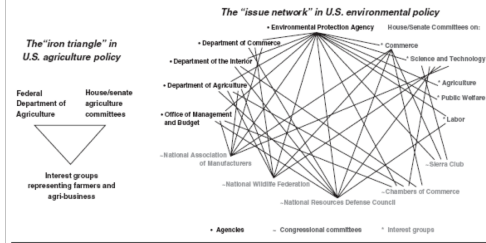
- Regulation is one of the most important jobs and one of the most controversial roles of bureaucracies
- U.S. has a “free enterprise” system, but it is regulated
 - Back in the day, not the case- laissez faire capitalism
 - Interstate Commerce Commission (1887): fed. regulation of railroad services
 - Tremendous growth of regulations
 - Enforcement is largely dependent on agency and bureaucratic discretion
 - Criticisms: overly complicated, increased prices, hurts American competition
 - Deregulation and weak enforcement of regulations has created problems:
 - Environmental pollution
 - Economic collapse in housing and financial industries

CONTROLLING THE BUREAUCRACY

- Presidents try to control the bureaucracy
 - Appoint agency heads who share their policy ideas and ideology
 - Issue Executive Orders
 - Budget
 - Reorganizing the agency
- Congress tries to control the bureaucracy
 - Influence the appointments of agency heads
 - Budget (“power of the purse”)
 - Hold oversight committee hearings
 - Create more detailed legislation
- The federal courts can also hold the bureaucracy accountable
 - Can rule a law or executive order unconstitutional



CONTROLLING THE BUREAUCRACY



- **Iron triangle** is the relationship between a regulated industry's interest group, the regulating agency (bureaucracy), and the committees in Congress that make policy in that area
- **Issue networks** consist of a informal group of interest groups, congressional staff, the media, think tanks, and various others who are drawn to an issue and try to shape government policy

UNDERSTANDING BUREAUCRACIES

- Bureaucracies make policy
- Part of the unelected policymaking institutions
 - Courts
 - Bureaucracy
- Too much government?
 - The federal bureaucracy has shrunk
 - Deregulation and devolution
 - Wide variety of social and economic problems we look toward the bureaucracy to solve