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CRASH COURSE | GOVERNMENT & POLITICS  
**BUREAUCRACY BASICS**

**VOCABULARY**

**bureaucracy:** “a complex structure of offices, tasks, rules and principles of organization that are employed by all large scale institutions to coordinate the work of their personnel”

**byzantine:** unnecessarily complicated or complex; referring to the former empire’s administration

**separation of powers:** the belief that each of three branches of government should have its own distinct powers

**federalism:** the division of power between national and state governments

1. What are “two points” to emphasize about the importance of bureaucracy?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do we employ bureaucrats if no one likes them? What functions do they serve?

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_



**FUN FACT**

The word *bureaucracy* is of French origin, and is created by combining *bureau* (“desk”) and *-cratie* (a suffix denoting a kind of government). It was always intended to be a **negative** term.

3. To which branch of government does the bureaucracy belong? \_\_\_\_\_



4. What are the “laws” bureaucracies make called? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How do executive bureaucratic agencies act like legislatures?

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6. Why does this create a “constitutional” problem or concern for firm believers in the principle of separation of powers?

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**FUN FACT**

The bureaucracy of the executive branch far outnumbers employees of other branches, with roughly **4,000,000 members** compared to 60,000 combined for the legislative and judicial branches as of 2017.



7. Why else (aside from "being useful" and "filling roles") otherwise unfilled, do we have so many bureaucracies?

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8. How would the lack of bureaucracies impact Congress?

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9. What are the main advantages of having bureaucracies?

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10. Most bureaucrats in your life are employed by which government? (**circle**)

**STATE**      **OR**      **FEDERAL**

Take additional notes here (or use it for your doodles):

# 15

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### VOCABULARY

**bureaucracy:** "a complex structure of offices, tasks, rules and principles of organization that are employed by all large scale institutions to coordinate the work of their personnel"  
**byzantine:** unnecessarily complicated or complex; referring to the former empire's administration  
**separation of powers:** the belief that each of three branches of government should have its own distinct powers  
**federalism:** the division of power between national and state governments

1. What are "two points" to emphasize about the importance of bureaucracy?
- 1) "bureaucracies are made up of experts who usually know more about the topic at hand than you do and who are able to divide up complex tasks so that they can get done."
  - 2) "Second, all large scale institutions use bureaucracies"

2. Why do we employ bureaucrats if no one likes them? What functions do they serve?

- 1) they are efficient; help gov. accomplish tasks
- 2) they make and enforce their own rules
- 3) "settle disputes through a process called administrative adjudication, which makes them kind of like courts."



### FUN FACT

The word *bureaucracy* is of French origin, and is created by combining bureau ("desk") and -cratie (a suffix denoting a kind of government). It was always intended to be a **negative** term.

3. To which branch of government does the bureaucracy belong? Executive



4. What are the "laws" bureaucracies make called? Regulations

5. How do executive bureaucratic agencies act like legislatures?

they make their own rules

6. Why does this create a "constitutional" problem or concern for firm believers in the principle of separation of powers?

the legislative branch is "supposed" to make rules/laws and the executive branch is merely "supposed" to

enforce them. Many bureaucratic agencies/departments both make and enforce their own laws.

**FUN FACT**

The bureaucracy of the executive branch far outnumbers employees of other branches, with roughly **4,000,000 members** compared to 60,000 combined for the legislative and judicial branches as of 2017.



7. Why else (aside from “being useful” and “filling roles” otherwise unfilled, do we have so many bureaucracies?

- "Congress keeps making them and delegating power to them."

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8. How would the lack of bureaucracies impact Congress?

"Congressman and their staff would be taking on all the oversight and enforcement of their own laws. In addition to creating its own separation of powers problem, this might be kind of chaotic, considering that potentially the entire House of Representatives could be replaced every two years."

9. What are the main advantages of having bureaucracies?

Stability. "Probably the main reason why we don't change bureaucracies though is that doing so is really difficult. Once Congress makes a bureaucracy it's usually permanent for a number of practical and political reasons."

10. Most bureaucrats in your life are employed by which government? (**circle**)

**STATE** OR **FEDERAL**

Take additional notes here (or use it for your doodles):