

THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY: OVERSIGHT AND SUPERVISION

Class Notes

AP Gov/Ms. Strong

The president, congress and the federal courts all have supervisory/oversight powers that hold the federal bureaucracy accountable:

I. The President can:

- Appoint and remove agency heads > helps the President carry out his policy agenda
- Reorganize the bureaucracy (with congressional approval)
- Issue executive orders to impact an agency's function or power
- Make changes or reduce an agency's annual budget proposal through the OMB
- Ignore legislative initiatives originating within the bureaucracy
- Institute or adjust policies that would, if enacted by Congress, alter the bureaucracy's activities

II. Congress can:

- Create new or abolish existing agencies, departments or programs
- Increase, cut or reduce federal agency/department funding
- Investigate agency activities
- Convene committee hearings to hold agencies accountable
- Pass legislation that alters an agency's functions
- Pass "*sunset legislation*" that calls for the termination of a program after a certain number of years unless it is certified by Congress to continue.
- Influence or even fail to confirm presidential appointments as agency heads

III. Federal courts can:

- Through judicial review, courts can rule on whether the bureaucracy has acted within the law and the U.S. Constitution
- Require policy changes to comply with the law
- Provide due process for individuals affected by a bureaucratic action
- Rule on the constitutionality of all bureaucratic rules and regulation