

Congress

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PLSC 1

Road map

- How do we solve the collective action problem?
- Congressional structure
- Legislative process

Your Task

You are all legislators of the Penn State Student Government Association. There has been rumblings of student demands for eliminating 8 am classes at Penn State Harrisburg. Each of you represents different constituencies. You have 30 minutes to craft and vote for a resolution for eliminating 8 am classes. This includes deciding when those classes will now be offered. You must organize yourselves.

Note that you must champion your constituents. If you fail to achieve their demands, you will lose your office.

How Congress Structures Its Work

- Constitutional Structure (Article I)
- Self-imposed structure

Constitutional Structure

Bicameral

Senate

- 2 per state
- 6 year term
- 1/3 elected every two years
- Minimum age: 30
- Vice President presides

House

- Based on state population
- Roughly 700,000 constituents
- 2 year term
- Minimum age: 25
- Speaker of House

Self-Imposed Structure

- Party caucusing
- Majority/minority leaders and whips
- Establishment of rules and procedures
- President pro tempore (majority leader)
- Standing and Permanent Select committees (21H, 19S)
- Processes for filling positions
- Reapportionment Act of 1929 - limits house to 435

Committees

- Standing – bills, hearings, investigations
- Joint - House and Senate, info only
- Conference - House and Senate to resolve differences in bills
- Ad Hoc, Special, Select - special investigations

Powers

Enumerated

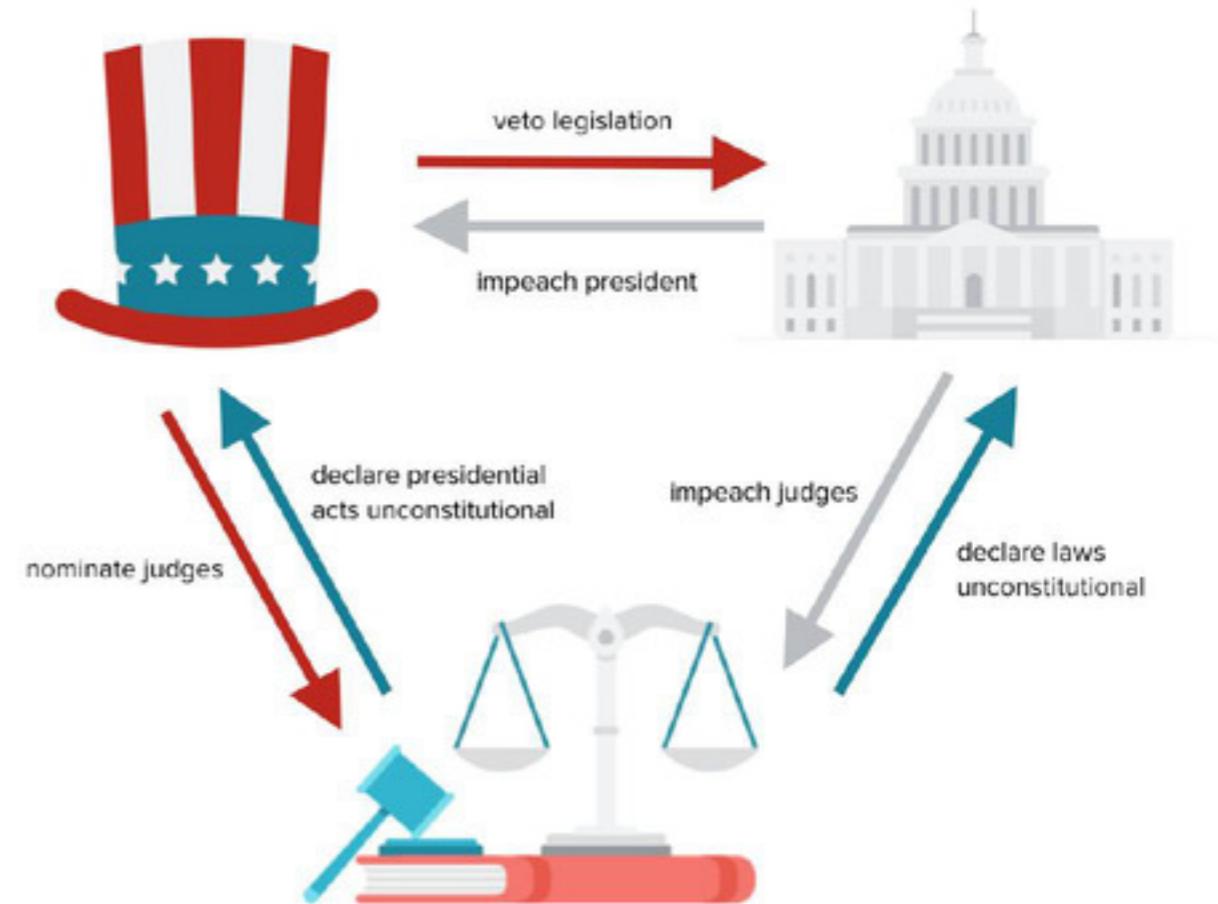
- Tax & apportionment
- War
- Raise army and navy
- Currency
- Borrow money
- Interstate commerce
- Immigration
- Patents

Implied

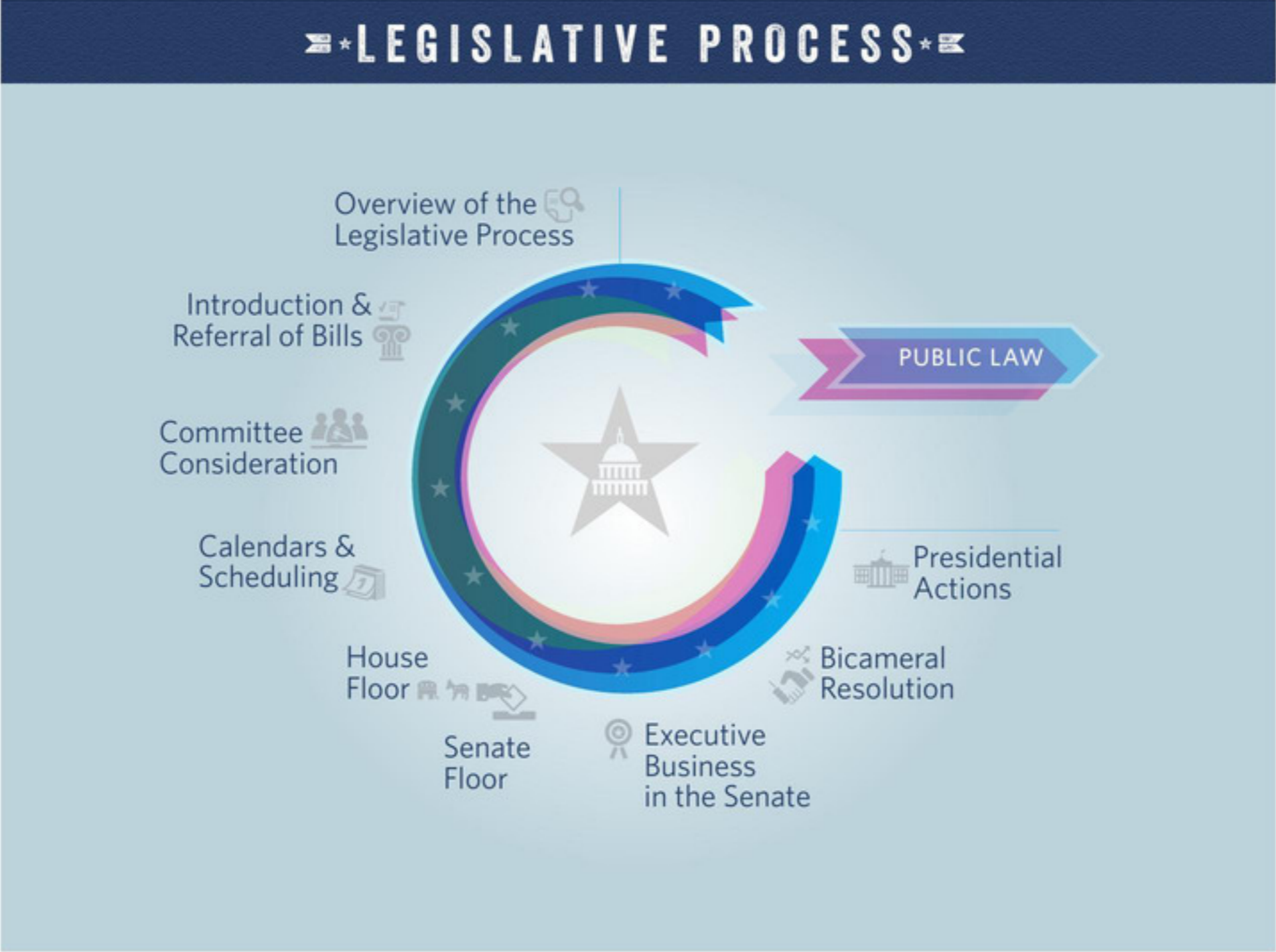
- Necessary and proper

Checks and Balances

- Senate confirmation
- Treaty advice and consent
- Power of the purse
- Impeachment and removal
- Oversight
- Court structure



Legislative Process



<https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process>