CONGRESS

A Simulation of the United States House of Representatives

AP United States Government & Politics

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Purpose

This simulation is designed to afford students in AP United States Government & Politics the opportunity to experience the basic workings of the United States House of Representatives. While many of the complexities of Congress are too difficult and extensive to fit into the one-week timeframe this simulation encompasses, students will engage in meaningful hands-on and real-life scenarios meant to broaden their understanding of how the House of Representatives works.

Simulation Description

(Prior to this simulation, you will have already engaged in a one- or two-day overview of the United States House of Representatives. Vocabulary has been previewed, the qualifications and elections process reviewed, and House sessions watched and analyzed. Remember, much of the content from the previous units – political parties, interest groups, the Constitution – will be brought into focus here.)

In this simulation, you will spend one week as members of the United States House of Representatives. During this week, you will be engaged in a series of activities designed to apply the vocabulary and concepts required by the AP United States Government and Politics curriculum in real-life circumstances. By the end of the experience, you will not only have a solid grasp of the complexities and nuances of how Congress and the legislative process works, but, if you take your responsibilities seriously, you will also be very well prepared for the many questions concerning Congress the AP exam will no doubt throw your way.

Simulation Focus Question

What factors influence a House member’s decision to sponsor or vote on a particular bill?

Simulation Objectives

Throughout the simulation and at its conclusion, the students will have met the following goals:

- Become knowledgeable about the most important vocabulary terms relating to Congress, its leadership and structure, and its day-to-day workings
- Apply the unit vocabulary in real-life situations
- Represent particular party, demographic, and special interest views
- Role-play various leadership positions that exist in the House of Representatives
- Carry out the entire lawmaking procedure in the House of Representatives
- Work in a committee structure similar to that of Congress
- Debate and amend proposed legislation at the committee level
- Debate and vote on proposed legislation at the level of the full House
- Maintain a personal day-to-day accounting of the legislative process
- Reflect on the lawmaking process in the House and critique how the system has come to work
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<td>Whip</td>
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Unit Assessments

You will be evaluated during this simulation in two ways: An on-going daily reflection and an end-of-simulation reflection (see Appendix II: Assessments for the specific requirements). Here is a brief description of both:

- **Daily Reflection Log:** A nightly reflection on the day’s in-class experience completed online. Focus is to be on personal reactions to process and procedure, debate, difficulties experienced, and general observations. Due by the next day’s proceedings, there are five required reflections at five points each.

- **End-of-Simulation Reflection:** Worth 40 points, a more in-depth reflection on the entire simulation experience focused on a set of defined criteria (see assignment). Additional emphasis is placed on the unit focus question. This is to be approached as a semi-formal essay.
The House of Representatives

DAY ONE – Role Assignments

First, you will be assigned a role (see Student Handout 1) comprising a combination of the following factors:

- YOUR POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat or Republican
- YOUR DISTRICT’S DEMOGRAPHIC: Rural, urban, or suburban
- YOUR DISTRICT’S ECONOMIC INTEREST: Agriculture, technology, or blue collar

Any decisions you make over the next week should incorporate the ideological and policy interests reflected in the different roles you are assigned. Thus, if you are a Republican representing a rural and agricultural district, chances are good you might oppose legislation that seeks to limit or ban all farm subsidies. Likewise, if you are a Democrat representing an urban and blue collar district, you might oppose a bill that would possibly ship manufacturing jobs overseas. You should also decide what governing philosophy you adhere to, whether it’s the delegate (representational) model, trustee (and/or organizational) model, or politico (attitudinal) model, or a combination of any or all of the three, given the circumstances.

Second, both the majority and minority party members (determined by which party actually is in power in the year in which this simulation takes place) will select their leadership (Speaker of the House, Majority Leader, Minority Leader, whips) (see Student Handout 2 and Vocabulary).

Finally, you will be assigned by your leadership to one of several important standing committees (see Student Handout 3 and Vocabulary) that actually exist in the House of Representatives. It is important to remember that not every member of the House belongs to a committee. Only those chosen by party leadership are lucky enough to land a committee seat. So consider yourself one of those lucky individuals! (For the purposes of this simulation, the leadership will also occupy a committee seat in order to be part of the whole experience. This does not happen in the real halls of Congress.)

*Your Homework

- Review the vocabulary underlined above.
- Become very familiar with your assigned roles
- Review the roles and powers of EACH party leader and committee (regardless of what you’ve been assigned).
- Read pages 343 to 352 in your textbook on how a bill becomes a law. For this week’s purposes, pay particular attention to the vocabulary as well as “Study By Committees” and “Floor Debate – The House.”
DAYS TWO & THREE – Committee Simulation

Today, you will be working in your assigned standing committees. Several bills have been proposed and assigned by the Speaker of the House to your committee for examination (see Student Handouts 4-6). Typically, your committee also has at least one subcommittee that examines specific aspects of the legislation. For this simulation, it is to be assumed that the subcommittee has completed its work and has submitted the bills to the full committee for consideration.

It is today and tomorrow that you will:

- consider the proposed legislation;
- discuss and debate their provisions in an orderly fashion;
- propose and vote on amendments to the bills;
- hold an up or down vote on the bills or decide not to vote at all

If a bill passes in your committee, it is then sent on to the House Rules Committee (played in this simulation by the Speaker and the Majority Leader) to determine when and for how long the bill will be presented for debate on the floor of the House. If a bill does not pass, it simply dies in committee and goes no further. This is what happens to most bills proposed in the House.

Some basic rules for the committee process:

- All debate is controlled by the committee chair (always of the majority party; the minority party leader in each committee is known as the ranking member). No one may speak unless called upon by the chairperson.
- Debate is held on all amendments as well as the final bill.
- Votes can be cast by a simple yea or nay or by recorded vote, at the discretion of the chairperson. But any committee member can request a recorded vote.

*Take note of how the bills are presented. Each bill’s title begins with “H.R.”, meaning “House Resolution,” followed by a number, assigned in the order the bills are introduced dating back to the beginning of that Congress’s session. Thus, H.R. 1 is the first bill introduced in the new Congress.

**Your committee must consider both bills presented to it today and tomorrow. You have a time limit!**

*Your Homework (for both days)

✓ Review the vocabulary underlined above.
✓ Research the issues relating to the two bills before your committee for further understanding and to better participate in the simulation.
✓ Continue examining the proposed legislation, prepare any amendments you may want to propose, and construct arguments you want to make for or against the bill.
DAYS FOUR & FIVE – House Simulation

Today and tomorrow the full House is in session. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader have determined, based on the Rules Committee recommendations, the agenda for the next two days.

All bills that were passed in committee will be debated, as per the rules set by the Rules Committee, and voted on. The amount of time allotted for debate and voting depends on how many bills are before the House over the next two days. Thus, if all six bills that reached the three committees passed, then the time set for each bill will be limited. If only two passed, then debate can last longer.

Depending on the time permitted for debate, each member of the House may participate in floor debate. For the purpose of this simulation, the Speaker of the House will preside over the proceedings and will call upon members of the House who wish to speak in favor of or against the bill. Additionally, all party leaders have a strong role in floor debate and voting (see Student Handout #7).

For the general rules and decorum expected in floor debate, see Student Handout #8.

Amendments:

If the Rules Committee allows for an open rule (as opposed to a closed rule), members may offer up amendments to the bill being debated. Debate then ensues on the amendment and a vote may occur.

Voting Options:

When it comes time for a vote, each member of the House will participate in a roll call vote of “yea” or “nay” on a piece of paper (the process of the voting in the actual House is a bit more complicated). To pass, a bill must receive a simple majority in favor. If a bill passes, it will move on to the Senate (next week!). If it fails, it officially dies. The Speaker of the House will announce the vote tally and whether or not the bill has passed.

However, if after all floor debate and amendments have been voted on, the Minority Leader or a member of the minority from the committee in which the bill originated may motion to recommit the bill to committee for reconsideration. If the motion to recommit has instructions (such as to consider the bill with a new amendment or hold more hearings), the committee must follow those instructions and submit it back to the House in quick order. If the motion to recommit is without instructions, the bill dies. Thus, if this motion passes the full House, it is sent back to committee. If it fails, full House vote on the bill follows.

*Your Homework*

- Review the vocabulary underlined above
- After the House simulation has concluded, refer to Appendix II: Assessments for your post-House simulation assignment.
Appendix I:
Student Handouts
# Assigned Roles

<table>
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<th>POLITICAL PARTY</th>
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<td><strong>Democrat</strong></td>
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</table>
| Membership in this party means you tend to be more moderate to liberal in your political views. Depending on the demographics represented and personal background, Democrats typically see government as a positive and active force in American society.  

As a member of the Democratic Party, you are more likely to be in favor of higher taxes on wealthier Americans, tougher regulations on businesses and corporations, and more government involvement in areas where ordinary Americans have little say or influence. |
| **Republican**  |
| Membership in this party means you tend to be more moderate to conservative in your political views. Depending on the demographics represented and personal background, Republicans typically see government as a more negative force that needs to be limited in certain areas of society.  

As a member of the Republican Party, you are more likely to oppose any new or higher taxes (and you typically champion lower income taxes across the board). Favor fewer and less stringent regulations on businesses and corporations, and call for less government involvement in people’s lives in the name of the free market and personal freedom. |
## DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHIC

| Rural | Typically, rural voters tend to be more conservative both economically and socially. As such, the values of these voters often reflect religious morality, economic independence, and a desire for more local decision-making rather than more federal government intervention. Yet, they do tend to welcome federal assistance in areas that can tend to their collective economic needs. Rural regions are usually not racially or ethnically diverse, though with the presence migrant and permanent farm workers from Central and Latin America, that is changing. Many rural districts depend on agriculture as the primary means of generating income, while some rely on small businesses, shipping, and other related industries. Additionally, rural communities often – but not always – lack the wealth of their suburban and urban counterparts. Depending on the region, many rural communities live in moderate to significant poverty due to economic changes and lack of diverse job training and opportunities. But some technology-based companies, especially those centered on alternative energies, have a strong interest in these regions. |
| Suburban | Suburbs typically comprise a good mix of rural and urban interests and are the hotbed of economic activity and changes. While most developing suburban areas comprise few racial or ethnic minorities, others are quite diverse. The voter values of suburbia often depend on the region of the state in which the city is located and the economic and social interests of the regions around them. Therefore, it is difficult to predict exactly what political values such regions espouse in general. Suburban voters tend to be more moderate in their political leanings, often a mix of socially liberal and fiscally conservative. A lot of wealth resides in America’s suburbs, as they are home to many of America’s lawyers, doctors, businessmen and women, and entrepreneurs. Thus, considerable investment in new technologies and other economic opportunities resides in these areas, and government support of this is often welcomed. Still, there are many pockets of economic stagnation and poverty in America’s older suburbs especially. |
| Urban | Urban voters are the most diverse of all voting blocs. Considerably numbers of racial and ethnic minorities are represented in these districts. The voters in these districts tend to be much more liberal than their rural counterparts, with their views reflecting a very different culture and background. They advocate significant government investment in urban communities and job training and tend to support higher taxes on the wealthy as means of paying for such programs. Higher rates of poverty and lack of job opportunities is common, though urban areas do tend to experience economic transformations more quickly than rural regions. While urban K-12 schools often struggle, colleges and universities in these regions thrive, receiving students from all over the country and the world. |
## DISTRICT ECONOMIC INTEREST

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>The main focus for agricultural interests is creating an political and economic atmosphere that will best serve farmers, large and small. A major part of the agricultural lobby is agri-business, the large corporations that have increasingly taken over much of America’s farm and grazing lands to serve the needs to large grocery stores, restaurant chains, and other business interests. A main focus for the agricultural interests is farm subsidies and agricultural research, both of which are heavily supported by the government. The purpose of subsidies to help the average farmers make ends meet and ensure that they have a decent standard of living despite food and cattle prices. Much of the subsidies do go to the larger corporations as well. Likewise, the government helps to fund research in areas of soil utilization, farming techniques, and genetic modification.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology interests are served heavily by government investment in research and development, with much of the money going to various companies and universities to carry out such work. The focus of such research varies, from computer and programming technologies to alternative fuels and energy, from communications technology to new missile systems. Indeed, defense contracting is a major part of technology investment and serves to create thousands of jobs around the country. Further investment in job training in technology-based areas are important to those in the industry. An able workforce is a top priority if the U.S. is to compete in the global marketplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>Blue collar workers are those who typically work in manual labor for hourly wages. Many blue collar jobs require little formal training, though some are emerging that call for at least a 2-year degree in technical training in the field. While many such workers are not unionized, many are, and the unions have a strong voice in representing the interests of their membership. As such, many blue collar workers are fearful of losing their factory jobs to overseas competition and typically the unions oppose any government action that might allow that to happen. Many blue collar regions are the country have been wracked with high unemployment and lower wages due to factory closings and the changing economy. Workers in America’s chain stores and restaurants often don’t earn enough to make ends meet and often lack health insurance, which necessitates working more than one job, collecting welfare benefits, or both.</td>
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# Party Leadership Duties (House)

| **Speaker of the House** | ▪ Presiding officer of the House of Representatives  
▪ Determine majority party committee chairs and seats (with the Majority Leader)  
▪ Selects 9 of the 13 members of the House Rules Committee  
▪ Appoints all members of select and conference committees  
▪ Determines which committees will consider which bills  
▪ Sets and advocates for majority party’s agenda  
▪ Determines when each bill is debated and voted on  
▪ Appoints temporary speakers (Speaker pro tempore) to preside over House proceedings  
▪ Appoints chairpersons when the House resolves into Committee of the Whole to consider bills and amendments  
▪ Is second in the line of succession to the presidency behind the Vice-President  
*Typically, the Speaker does not participate in floor debate or votes except in matters of great importance* |
| --- | --- |
| **Majority Leader** | ▪ Floor leader of the party in power  
▪ Works with the Speaker of the House and the Majority Whip to coordinate support for legislation and the party agenda  
▪ Helps schedule bills for floor debate  
▪ Manages all House committees and chairpersons  
▪ Plans the party’s daily, weekly, and annual legislative agenda  
▪ Often voices the majority view on the floor of the House in lieu of the Speaker  
*Not a Constitutionally-mandated position* |
| **Minority Leader** | ▪ Floor leader of the minority (opposition) party  
▪ Select committee membership for the minority party  
▪ Promotes and publicizes the minority party’s agenda  
▪ Unify the party against the majority  
*Not a Constitutionally-mandated position* |
| **Party Whips** | ▪ Manages the party’s legislative agenda on the floor of the House  
▪ Keeps tabs on legislation  
▪ Works to ensure all party members vote the party line  
▪ Works to ensure all party members are present for a vote on a bill  
*Not a Constitutionally-mandated position* |

*Once chosen as a party leader, time should be taken to research your role a bit further so you can be fully prepared to play the role as well as possible.*
Committee Assignments (House)

As of October 2011, there are 21 standing committees in the House of Representatives. However, only three of these committees will be part of this simulation: Ways and Means, Appropriations, and Armed Services.

All legislation that makes it through the committee process is then assigned to the House Rules Committee, which, for the purpose of this simulation, will be represented by the students playing the roles of Speaker of the House and Majority Leader.

| Ways and Means                        | • Considered the most powerful committee in the House  
|                                       | • Oversees all tax and revenue-raising legislation, including tariffs and trade policy  
|                                       | • Also oversees Social Security, Medicare, Welfare (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), unemployment benefits, child support laws, and foster care and adoption laws and programs  
|                                       | • Members exert powerful influence over policy  
| Appropriations                        | • Also one of the most powerful committees in the House  
|                                       | • Oversees all specific allocations to government departments and programs based on the current federal budget (power of the purse)  
| Armed Services                        | • Responsible for funding and oversight of the Department of Defense as well as some parts of the Department of Energy  
|                                       | • Oversees and considers legislation concerning new and existing weapons systems, military technology, nuclear and other weapons research, and the military budget.  
|                                       | • Provides oversight concerning armed service deployment and military conflicts  

House Ways and Means Committee:
Bill #1

112th Congress
1st Session
HR 23

To amend the tax code of the United States and lower the upper income tax rate from 36 to 20 percent of all earned income.

Mr. SMITH of Delaware (for himself, Mr. JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. ERICSON, Mr. BLANCHARD, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. MILLER, Ms. DAYHOFF of Texas, Mr. TURNER, and Mrs. GREGORIO of Pennsylvania) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

A BILL

To amend the tax code of the United States and lower the upper income tax rate from 36 to 20 percent of all earned income.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘Encouraging Higher Earnings Act of 2012’.

SECTION 2. REDUCTION OF THE TOP MARGINAL TAX RATE.

(a) The top marginal income tax rate shall henceforth be 20 percent of all earned income.

(1) Earned income refers only to that acquired through employment wages or salary and does not include dividends, investments, stock options, or any other income.

(b) No other income tax rates shall be adjusted as a result of the top marginal rate being reduced.

(c) If, as a result of this legislation, government revenue decreases due to economic recession, the no income tax rates, including the top marginal rate, shall be increased but instead government spending must be reduced to meet the budget needs.
House Ways and Means Committee:
Bill #2

112th Congress
1st Session

HR 47

To ensure equal access to quality and affordable health care by expanding eligibility for Medicare benefits to all Americans.

Mr. STRAIT of California (for himself, Mr. COLGAN of Illinois, Ms. WITHERS of Pennsylvania, Mr. HASTINGS and Ms. BENNETT of New York) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

A BILL

To ensure equal access to quality and affordable health care by expanding eligibility for Medicare benefits to all Americans.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘Expanding Medicare to All Act of 2012’.

SECTION 2. EXPANDING ELIGIBILITY FOR MEDICARE TO ALL AMERICANS.

(a) Medicare and all programs that fall under its jurisdiction shall henceforth be made available to all Americans regardless of age, prior insurance, or preexisting condition.

   (1) Eligibility for Medicare thus changes from the minimum age of 65 to birth.

   (2) All programs that fall under the jurisdiction of Medicare include Part A: Hospital Insurance, Part B: Medical Insurance, Part C: Medicare Advantage, and Part D: Prescription Drugs Plan.

   (3) ‘Preexisting condition’ refers to any health condition that may increase risk of hospitalization and treatment for said condition.

(b) To cover the funding for the expansion of Medicare benefits, the current tax rate of 2.9 percent shall increase to 5 percent, split evenly between employer and employee.

(c) No American may be denied by the United States Government, an insurance company, or employer access to Medicare benefits.
House Appropriations Committee:
Bill #1

112th Congress
1st Session

HR 13

To reduce the federal budget deficit by eliminating subsidies to the wealthiest American farmers and agriculture-based corporations.

Mr. GODACK of Connecticut (for himself, Ms. HUTCHISON of Nevada, Mr. ARMOR of California, Mr. SNYDER and Ms. DANDIGNAC of Maine) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

A BILL

To reduce the federal budget deficit by eliminating subsidies to the wealthiest American farmers and agriculture-based corporations.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘Elimination of Farm Corporate Welfare Act of 2012’.

SECTION 2. ELIMINATING FARM SUBSIDIES TO WEALTHY FARMERS AND AGRICULTURE-BASED CORPORATIONS.

(a) All federal money distributed in the form of subsidies going to wealthy farmers and agriculture-based corporations shall henceforth be eliminated.

(1) ‘Wealthy farmers’ refers to all citizens owning agricultural or livestock farms that generate more than $200,000 in revenue per year.

(2) “Agriculture-based corporations” refers to all publicly-traded companies and their subsidiaries that generate the majority of their income from agricultural- or livestock-based transactions.

(b) All moneys saved from the elimination of said subsidies shall be appropriated toward paying down the national debt.
House Appropriations Committee:
Bill #2

112th Congress
1st Session
HR 103

To further reduce America’s dependence on foreign energy sources by increasing funding toward research in ethanol technology.

Mr. WADEL of Iowa (for himself, Ms. TURNER and Mr. DOLLY of Iowa, Mr. SIEG of Kansas, Ms. MILLER and Mr. WAYBRANT of Indiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

A BILL

To further reduce America’s dependence on foreign energy sources by increasing funding toward research in ethanol technology.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘Reducing Dependence on Foreign Oil Act of 2012’.

SECTION 2. EXPANDING APPROPRIATIONS TOWARD RESEARCH IN CORN-BASED ETHANOL TECHNOLOGY.

(a) The research budget for corn-based ethanol technology shall be increased by $350 million.

(b) Funding shall be provided in the form of research grants to institutions of higher education, private research foundations, and agriculturally and technology-based businesses dedicated to developing more efficient and economical fuel models for petroleum-based technology.

(c) No funding shall be awarded to any entity that seeks to replace corn-based ethanol with any other agricultural or synthetic product.
House Armed Services Committee:
Bill #1

112th Congress
1st Session
HR 336

To reduce the defense budget by eliminating the Zumwalt class destroyer (DDG-1000) program, the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35 Lightning II), and the Virginia class (or SSN-774 class).

Mr. HARBAUGH of Vermont introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

A BILL

To reduce the defense budget by eliminating the Zumwalt class destroyer (DDG-1000) program, the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35 Lightning II), and the Virginia class (or SSN-774 class).

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ‘Eliminating Costly and Unnecessary Navy Projects Act of 2012’.

SECTION 2. ELIMINATING UNNECESSARY AND COSTLY NAVY WEAPONS PROJECTS.

(a) All research, funding, and development of the Zumwalt class destroyer (DDG-1000) shall be eliminated, at a savings of $9.9 billion.

(b) All research, funding, and development of the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35 Lightning II) shall be eliminated, at a savings of $323 billion over ten years.

(c) All research, funding, and development of the Virginia class (or SSN-774 class) shall be eliminated, at a savings of $1.3 billion each.

(d) All cost savings shall be re-appropriated to fund K-12 and higher education projects, to be determined by the Appropriations and Education and the Workforce Committees.
House Armed Services Committee:
Bill #2

112\textsuperscript{th} Congress

1\textsuperscript{st} Session

HR 501

To uphold the sanctity of marriage in the military by allowing marriage to be recognized as a union only between a man and a woman.

Mr. WILLARD of Texas (for himself, Mr. BAIR and Mr. MURREN of Mississippi, Ms. EBAUGH of South Carolina, Mr. LAING and Mr. DUNN of Pennsylvania) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

A BILL

To uphold the sanctity of marriage in the military by allowing marriage to be recognized as a union only between a man and a woman.

\textit{Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,}

\textbf{SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.}

This Act may be cited as the ‘Defense of Marriage in the Military Act of 2012’.

\textbf{SECTION 2. DECLARING THAT MARRIAGES IN THE MILITARY ARE BETWEEN A MAN AND WOMAN.}

(a) All marriages recognized in the United States Armed Forces shall be declared to be between a man and woman.

(1) ‘United States Armed Forces’ refers to all people and organizations under the jurisdiction of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and all National Guard units in the United States.

(b) Marriages recognized in various states that do not include a man and a woman shall not be recognized in the United States Armed Forces.

(c) No recognized benefits of marriage shall be accorded to any married couple that does not comprise a man and a woman in the United States Armed Forces.
House Floor Debate

Guidelines for the Party Leaders

*Prior to the commencement of floor debate, the party leaders will gather for five minutes to determine how the debate will transpire. The Rules Committee and Speaker have determined how much time will be allotted for debate on each bill, with time split equally between sides.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

- Remember that typically the Speaker of the House rarely presides over floor debate but rather appoints another member of the House to do so. For the purposes of this simulation, however, the Speaker shall preside over debate concerning all bills presented to the floor of the House.
- The Speaker typically does not vote unless the bill is considered to be of grave importance or if the vote is very close. It will be your decision whether or not to vote on any of the bills.
- During floor debate, your job is to ensure that all rules and decorum are followed. You will determine who speaks by calling on those who wish to rise in favor or against a bill. To call on a member, simply say “The chair recognizes the gentleman (or gentlewoman) from ____.”

MAJORITY LEADER

- Your job is simple: Voice your party’s overall position on the bill being considered and help lead your party’s vote on the matter.
- While you are leading the debate, you may yield some of your time (determined by the Speaker and Rules Committee) to other members of the House, particularly those of your own party.
- You can also work with the party whip to ensure that your members vote the way you want them to.

MINORITY LEADER

- Similar to the Majority Leader, you are the figurehead of your party and therefore lead the debate on your party’s behalf.
- While you are leading the debate, you may yield some of your time (determined by the Speaker and Rules Committee) to other members of the House, particularly those of your own party.
- You can also work with the party whip to ensure that your members vote the way you want them to.

PARTY WHIPS

- Just do your job: Make sure all members of your party are present and vote the way the party leadership wants them to vote.
RULES OF DECORUM & DEBATE IN THE HOUSE

MEMBERS MUST:

- Address themselves solely and directly to the Chair. They may not address other Members, individuals in the gallery, or persons who might be observing through the media.

- Refer to Members by state, not by name.

- Avoid characterizing another Member's personal intent or motives and discussing personalities.

- Refrain from speaking disrespectfully of the Speaker, other Members, the President or Vice President.

- Refrain from referring to the official conduct of other Members where such conduct is not under consideration by way of a report of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct or as a question of the privilege of the House.

- Refrain from referring to the specific votes of particular Senators.

- Refrain from using profane or vulgar language.

- Avoid walking in the well when a Member is speaking.

- Ensure that all handouts distributed on the floor or adjacent rooms comport with the rules of propriety for spoken words, and that all handouts bear the name of the authorizing Member.

- Refrain from eating, smoking, or using electronic equipment, including cellular phones or lap top computers, on the floor.

- Wear appropriate business attire.

NOTE -- Debate which violates the rules of decorum may result in a Member's words being taken down.

*Taken from: http://democrats.rules.house.gov/archives/house_decorum.htm
Appendix II:
Assessments
During the course of this simulation, you are required to keep a daily accounting of your experiences and thoughts on the lawmaking process. This is not an extensive reflection. Rather, it is simply a collection of your thoughts, wonderings, observations, and musings about not only how things might work in the actual House of Representatives but also how things are working for you in this simulation.

Directions:

During each day of the simulation, keep some notes concerning the process you’re going through on that particular day, the bills considered, the debates that ensue, and some general observations you make along the way. Maybe you have some thoughts on the role of the House leadership you’ve not contemplated before. Or perhaps you’re finding that your role as representative isn’t as easy or as simple as you thought it might be.

Each night, simply go to the Class Discussions page on our AP Government Web site. Decide what you want to reflect upon (it doesn’t need to be everything you thought of during the class) and just start typing. This is nothing formal; it’s just your public legislative diary, or blog. No more than a paragraph is needed, unless of course you’re inclined to keep going!

*Reflections are due the in the evening of each day of the simulation.

**There are a total of five reflection entries, for five points each, 25 points total.
Congress

End-of-Simulation Reflection

This simulation was designed to afford you the opportunity to experience at least in some fashion how Congress works and what it takes to actually get legislation passed. All of the interests represented, political views put forth, and deals brokered make for quite a complex process. Much of this – though certainly not all of it – is what the “founders” intended. But does it work well enough for our country’s and the people’s needs?

Directions

Write a two- to three-page (double-spaced) reflection of your experience during this simulation. Include in this reflection the following (20 points):

- Your assigned role(s); Which party? What interests did you represent? If applicable, what leadership position did you occupy?
- Your initial approach to representation (delegate, trustee, politico) and why
- Committee assignment and bills considered
- Your impressions of the committee process
- How you voted in committee and why
- Your impressions of the bill consideration process in the full House
- Bills considered and how you voted in the full House session

Then, using your experience as a guide, write a two-paragraph response to these questions (20 points):

What factors influence a House member’s decision to sponsor or vote on a particular bill? Is this the best and fairest way our system of representation can work, or can major improvements be made? Explain your position(s).

*This reflection is worth 40 points.*