

Centennial Honors College
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ABSTRACT

Major: Political Science

Podium

Faculty Mentor(s): Jonathan Day

United State's Congressional Committees

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This paper examines the United States Congress's committee system, focusing on the function, the significance, and the criticisms of standing, special/select, and joint congressional committees. My research aims to explore congressional committees and put the knowledge in ways that the general public can understand—most American people are misinformed or under informed about the government, so my purpose for researching congressional committees is to help make understanding the committees simple. Using several resources, ranging from social science journals to government websites, I have explored each type of congressional committee and examined several specific committees in each type: standing, special/select, and joint. Congressional committees exist to examine government functions and identify possible issues, gather information, and give recommendations; through my research, it became apparent that standing committees are the backbone of Congress, special/select committees address specific issues, and joint committees are to collaborate efforts across chambers. While congressional committees have lots of advantages, they also come with challenges—the increasing partisanship and special interests are major criticisms that the general American public have with congressional committees. With my research, I hope to simplify the inner workings of congressional committees for those who know little about them.