

# Committee Research Assignment

Congratulations on your new committee appointment! It may not have been your first choice, but that is often how it goes for new members in Congress.

The issues before Congress are typically more complex and multidimensional than they seem on the surface. Shedding light on a topic can be an important source of influence. For this to happen though, committees need to know their issues. This assignment asks you and your colleagues to research your committee's primary issue responsibilities.

**Each committee submits a single essay assignment.** The assignments differ slightly depending on the type of committee (see below).

Part I should require about 1 single-spaced page of text (total). This is prepared by the Committee chair.

Part II should also require about 1 single-spaced page of text for each issue (see below). Each of these is prepared by a committee member.

Part III is the responsibility of the Committee chair

A good place to begin your research is the website of the actual congressional committee. The [CQ Researcher](#) (you need to login to the UW library) also provides historical summaries of current issues via the searchable *CQ Almanac*. Because Congress does not take up legislation on every issue in every year, you should consider the 'hot' issues your committee has addressed over the years and not just in the most recent year.

## **For the Appropriations Committee**

Each member of the Appropriations committee summarizes one department's budget, such as how much of the overall federal budget is devoted to that department, and how spending breaks down across the department's top programs.

## **For Policy Committees**

### Part I

1. Name your committee and describe the scope of its responsibilities (it's jurisdiction).
2. Describe where/how these responsibilities overlap with those of other committees. For example, what other committees might claim the right to review legislation that also falls under the jurisdiction of your committee?
3. Identify the major/hot issues that have come before the committee in recent years.

## Part II

4. Assign one major/hot issue to each committee member. For each:

- Introduce the issue and why the committee has deemed it to be a major/hot issue
- Describe its origins as an issue and important political developments of recent history
- Provide information about programmatic spending or estimated costs, where appropriate
- Identify the most controversial provisions or proposals, and explain why they are controversial
- Identify the key interests that have or are supporting the issue and why
- Identify the key interests that have or are supporting the issue and why
- Indicate which student prepared the issue brief.

## Part III

The Committee chair has the ability to edit the Committee description. Complete the committee research assignment task by uploading a concise description of the committee's issue responsibilities, and the hot issues before the committee in recent years.