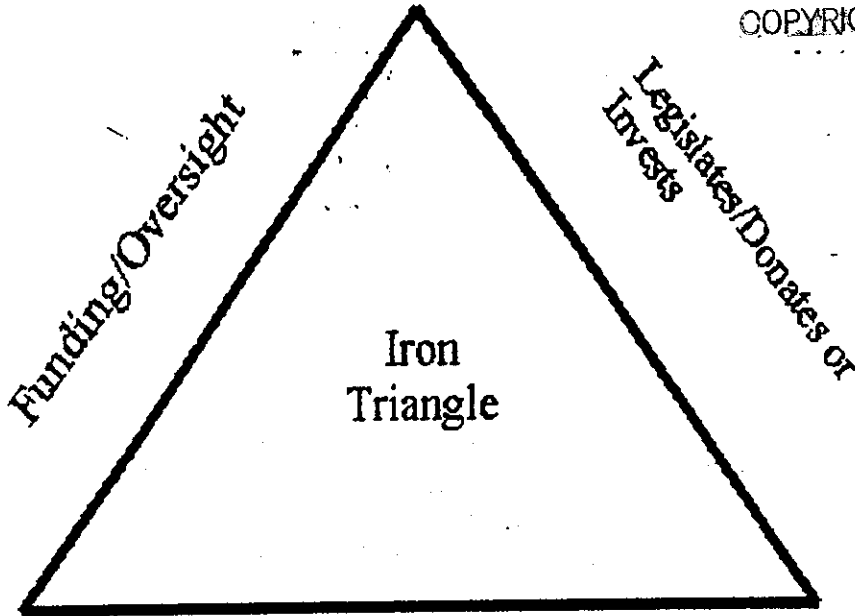


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|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Political Science 201 | United States Politics | Fall 1999 |
| 1:00-1:50 MUWTh | Joseph Boland | 176 ED |

Iron Triangle

Congressional Committee

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Executive Agency
(President)

Contracts/Supplies or
Regulates/Regulated

Interest Group
(Lobbyist)

Congressional committees act as legislative gatekeepers – virtually all bills must pass through one or more committees before reaching the floor of the House or Senate. Hence interest groups strive to procure favorable consideration of bills they like, favorable amendments to bills they find partially objectionable, and rejection of bills they oppose. In exchange for this, legislators receive campaign contributions, investments in their district or state, and other kinds of favors. Executive agencies receive funding from and are overseen by Congressional committees. In exchange for cooperation with the interest groups or groups it regulates, they receive political protection. Support given by the interest group to members of the committee results in friendly oversight. In turn, both the committee and the interest groups back the executive agency in budget battles and the like. In the case of the contractor–supplier relationship between an executive agency and an interest group, the alliance between them works to protect the economic interest of the supplier in continued contracts and the institutional interest of the agency in continued funding. In general, iron triangles are marked by a mutuality of interests that reinforces the powers of each institution involved.

"BUREAUCRACY AND INNOVATION"

(Victor Thompson)

Innovative Organizations

High Innovative Capacity

A. Qualities and Conditions

Professionalism/problem solving ideology
Uncommitted money/time/skills
Professionals/professional orientations
Diversity of inputs
Wide diffusion of ideas, problems, solutions
Org. perceived as ave. for professional growth
Emphasis on intrinsic rewards/esteem
Benevolent intellectual competition
Problem insecurity/personal security
Creative atmosphere free from external pressure
Considerable autonomy
High interorganizational mobility
Dispersed power
Low organizational chauvinism

B. Structural Considerations

A coalition-looseness, multiple sources of legitimacy
Duplicating/overlapping duties o.k.
Professional/type job descriptions
Freedom in communications
Conflict is legitimate
Multiple group memberships
Integrative groupings
Vagueness about jurisdictions
Dynamic structure/problem based
Organized by innovative area
Decentralized resource control

C. Administrative Practices

Performance evaluated by peers
Multiple ranking systems/salary scales
Dispersed administrative activities

Bureaucratic Organizations

High Productive Efficiency

A. Qualities and Conditions

Production/ideology/instrumentalism
Detailed specification of resources
Bureaucrats/bureaucratic orientation
Uniformity in inputs
Narrow, segregated diffusion of ideas
Org. perceived as political system

Emphasis on extrinsic rewards-status
Malevolent power/status competition
Personal insecurity/problem security
Stringent theory of responsibility
fear of personal failure
Production oriented planners set goals
Low interorganizational mobility
Focused power in hierarchy
High organizational chauvinism

B. Structural Considerations

Monocratic structure-rational-legal base of legitimacy
Eliminates duplication/overlapping
Duties-type job descriptions
Communications highly stratified
Conflict is illegitimate
Authority groupings
Aggregative groupings
Sharp lines of departmentalization
Static structure
Organized by function
Centralized resource control

C. Administrative Practices

Supervisory performance ratings
Single system of ranks/salary scales
Centralized administrative activities