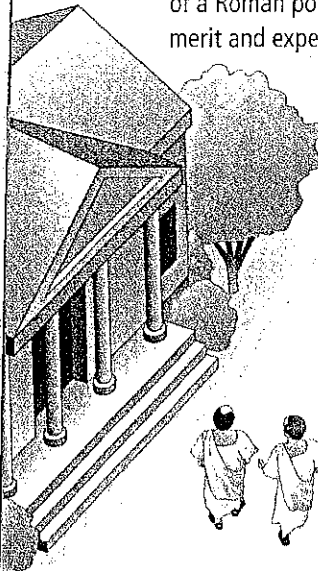


# THE ROMAN CURSUS HONORUM

In 180 B.C., the Romans enacted a law that formalized the career path of Roman officials. Called the *cursum honorum*, this path dictated that men hold particular offices in a certain order and assigned age requirements to these offices. Previously, Roman men could fill the offices in any order and do so at any age, as long as they had already completed a period of military service. The *cursum honorum* became the foundation of a Roman political system in which politicians advanced based on merit and experience rather than popularity, influence, or class.



## Censor (2)

- Patricians only originally; as of 339 B.C., one had to be plebeian; must have held consulship first
- Maintained the official list of Roman citizens; held much authority
- No minimum age



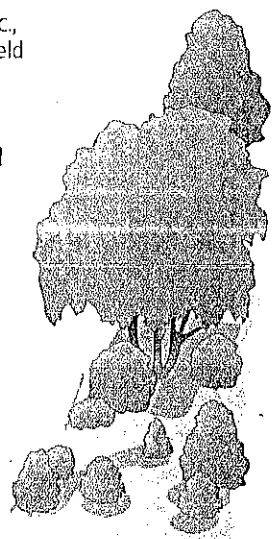
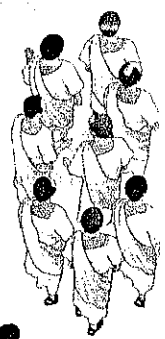
## Consul (2)

- Patricians only originally; as of 367 B.C., one had to be plebeian; must have held praetorship first
- Served as joint head of state; could veto other consul
- Minimum age of 42 for plebeians and 40 for patricians



## Praetor (8 by 100 B.C.)

- Patricians only originally; as of 337 B.C., plebeians eligible; must have held quaestorship first
- Served as legal officers with broad authority in government; stood in for consuls when they were away
- Minimum age set at 39



## Tribune of the Plebs (10)

- Plebeians only; usually held quaestorship first
- Presided over plebeian assembly and advocated for plebeian demands
- No minimum age



## Aedile (4 by 366 B.C.)

- Plebeians only originally; as of 366 B.C., 2 new offices open to plebeians and patricians; must have held quaestorship first
- Oversaw care of the city, distribution of grain, public games
- Minimum age 36

## Quaestor (20 by 82 B.C.)

- Patricians only originally; as of 421 B.C., plebeians eligible
- Oversaw finances in treasury and military
- Minimum age set at 30 in 82 B.C.



### Thinking Critically

1. **Draw Conclusions** Why do you think at least one of the censors had to be a plebeian?
2. **Predict Consequences** In what ways might the *cursum honorum* have changed politics in Rome?

## Comparing Republican Governments

	Rome	United States of America
<b>Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two consuls, elected by the assembly for one year—chief executives of the government and commanders-in-chief of the army.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A president, elected by the people for four years—chief executive of the government and commander-in-chief of the army.</li> </ul>
<b>Legislative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senate of 300 members, chosen from aristocracy for life—controls foreign and financial policies, advises consuls.</li> <li>Centuriate Assembly, all citizen-soldiers are members for life—selects consuls, makes laws.</li> <li>Tribal Assembly, citizens grouped according to where they live are members for life—elects tribunes and makes laws.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senate of 100 members, elected by the people for six-year terms—makes laws, advises president on foreign policy.</li> <li>House of Representatives of 435 members, elected by the people for two years—makes laws, originates revenue bills.</li> </ul>
<b>Judicial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Praetors, eight judges chosen for one year by Centuriate Assembly—two oversee civil and criminal courts (the others govern provinces).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supreme Court, nine justices appointed for life by president—highest court, hears civil and criminal appeals cases.</li> </ul>
<b>Legal code</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twelve Tables—a list of rules that was the basis of Roman legal system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>U.S. Constitution—basic law of the United States</li> </ul>
<b>Citizenship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All adult male landowners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All native-born or naturalized adults</li> </ul>

### SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts

- Comparing** *What similarities do you see in the governments of the Roman Republic and the United States?*
- Drawing Conclusions** *Which government seems more democratic? Why?*