

POLITICAL SCIENCE 517: THE U.S. CONGRESS

WINTER 2001

Meeting Times:

Room:

Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. -8:18 p.m. Denney Hall 346

Instructor: Bill Anderson
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 5 p.m. - 6:15 p.m. or by appointment
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The study of Congress is one of the most vibrant areas in American politics. Further, the public's interest in (or distaste for) Congress puts the critical examination of this institution at the forefront of the political science agenda. Our task this quarter is to comprehensively analyze the U.S. Congress in hopes of understanding precisely how and why this institution works.

The decisions made in Congress affect our daily lives-the food we eat, the taxes we pay, and the bridges and roads built near our homes all have the indelible mark of the U.S. Congress on them. But for as many positives as Congress provides, there are an equal number of negatives: graft, corruption, insincerity, and the infiltration of interests threaten to make the branch created "for and of the people" more distanced from the people than the Founders ever intended.

Our task this quarter is to learn about the U.S. Congress. We will examine its foundations, congressional elections, member behavior, its structure and function, its relationship to the other branches (and pseudo-branches) of government, and both its shortcomings and benefits. The goal is to make you think critically so that when pundits or maybe even your friends and relatives say "Congress is just a bunch of crooks," you'll do more than just nod your head and ignorantly agree.

Procedures and Requirements:

Readings

There are four required books and one recommended book for this course. They should be available at the University Bookstore, Long's, or SBX. You can also order each via Barnes and Noble, Amazon, or any other online bookseller.

Required

1. Jacobson, Gary. 2000. *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 5th Ed. New York: Longman.
2. Davidson, Roger and Walter Oleszek. 1999. *Congress and its Members*, 7th Ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Books.
3. Weisberg, Herbert F. and Samuel C. Patterson. 1998. *Great Theatre*. Cambridge University Press.
4. Rauch, Jonathan. 1999. *Government's End: why Washington Stopped Working*. New York: Public Affairs Press, LLC.

Optional

Ornstein, Mann, and Malbin. 2000. *Vital Statistics on Congress, 1999-2000*. Washington, D.C.: AEI Press.

There will also be an **additional set of readings** available through the Library's Electronic Reserve System, which can be accessed using searching for "Political Science 51 ~" at the following link:

<http://library.ohio-state.edu!search/r>

Electronic Reserve Readings are also available via hardcopy at the Reserve Desk in the Library. I've chosen to use electronic and regular reserve to save you the copyright fees associated with putting together a course pack.

Class Meetings

All of the material in this class is cumulative, and I will very often deviate from the readings during lecture. My lectures will be more specific, theoretical, and attentive to detail than the course books. **Missing lecture will be a significant impediment to achieving high marks in this course.**

Students should also expect to participate actively in class. Active participation requires careful reading of the material *before* class. I often will call on students to explain and/or discuss the readings for the class. If you fail to read...

Additionally, **I will give random quizzes during the quarter to encourage attendance at every lecture.** These quizzes will account for 10% of your final grade.

Students who miss quizzes will **not be permitted a make-up quiz** unless they have a documented reason for their absence or unless they contact me prior to the quiz (and have a compelling reason for missing it). Students who miss a quiz should not expect to take the same quiz the rest of the class takes.

You will also have a final paper due on the Monday of Finals Week. I will give you more detail about this final paper as we progress through the quarter. This final paper represents the final in the course.

Exams

You will have a midterm examination covering the course materials and lectures. This midterm will be a multiple choice and short answer exam. **There is no final for this course.** You have a final paper that is assumed to be your final examination-it will count for fully 50% of your grade.

Missed examinations/final papers are unacceptable except in the case of documented hardship (illness, a death in the immediate family, or other such things). If students will be unable to be at an examination (due to the reasons mentioned above), I must be contacted either via e-mail or phone prior to the examination. The only exception to this is a **documented emergency** that prevents the student from contacting me. Students who fail to contact me will not be permitted to take the examination/turn in the final paper late and will receive a zero.

Grades will be distributed as follows:

- 10% In-class quizzes
- 40% Midterm examination
- 50% Final Paper

Students with questions about their grades must contact the instructor. As noted above, late assignments will be penalized and late quizzes and examinations will not be permitted without prior approval of the instructor **or** without documented hardship (determined by University policy).

- **Academic Misconduct**

The University's Code of Student Conduct defines academic misconduct as "any activity which tends to compromise the integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process." In a classroom setting, academic misconduct typically refers to cheating on examinations or plagiarism in written assignments such as final papers.

Cheating and plagiarism are not only dishonest, but they are very unfair to students who do their best to succeed honestly. Consequently, I take such problems very seriously, and I will seek to punish willful acts of cheating or plagiarism. The Code of Conduct provides for punishment ranging from failing the course to expulsion, depending upon the nature of the misconduct.

- **Students with Disabilities**

If you have any condition, such as a physical, psychiatric, medical, or learning disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work required in this class, please notify me and the Office for Disability Services before the end of the first full week of class. Course materials are available in alternative formats upon request, and extra time may be allowed for exams in some cases. All information

about your disability will remain confidential.

Schedule:

January 3rd: Introduction and Trajectory for the Class

January 5th: The Constitutional Foundations of Congress

- John Adams "Federalist 39" and "Federalist 48" in Dolbeare, 2000.
- "The Constitution" in Dolbeare 2000, pp.84-95.
- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapters 1-2.

January 10th: Congressional Elections (art 1)-The Campaign

- Jacobson, Chapters 4 and 5
- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 4 (pp.89-105)

January 15th: No Class-Martin Luther King Holiday

January 17th: Congressional Elections (art 11)-The Vote

- Jacobson, Chapter 6
- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 4 (pp.106-125)

- Lacy, Dean. 1998. "Back from Intermission: The 1994 Elections and the Return to Divided Government." Chapter 4 in *Great Theatre*.

January 22nd: Representation: Delegate, Trustee, or What?

- Jacobson, Chapter 8 (pp.237-241)
- Weisberg, Herbert et al. 1999. "What is Representation?" Chapter 5 in *Classics in Congressional Politics*.
- Mayhew, David. "The Electoral Incentive." Chapter 1 from Mayhew's *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press (1975).

January 24~: Member Behavior in Congress-Strategy, Sincerity, and Pork

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 9
- Weisberg, Herbert, et al. 1999. "How do Legislators Decide How to Vote?" Chapter 24 in Weisberg et al. *Classics in Congressional Politics*. New York: Longman.
- Bianco, William T. 2001. "Strategic Behavior in Congress." Chapter 6 in *American Politics: Strategy and Choice*. New York: Norton.

The Structure of Congress

January 29th: Leaders and Parties

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 6
- Herrnson, Paul S. 1998. "Directing 535 Leading Men and Leading Ladies: Party Leadership in the Modern Congress." Chapter 5 in *Great Theatre*.
- Burden, Barry C. and Aage R. Clausen. 1998. "The Unfolding Drama: Party and Ideology in the 104~ House." Chapter 7 in *Great Theatre*.

January 31st: Committees

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 7
- Groseclose, Tim and David C. King. 1998. "Little Theatre: Committees in Congress." Chapter 6 in *Great Theatre*.
- Cox, Gary and Mathew McCubbins. 1993. "Controlling the Legislative Agenda." Chapter 10 in *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

January 5th: Rules of the Game, Unorthodox Paths, and the Legislative Process

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 8
- Sinclair, Barbara. 1997. "Multiple Paths: The Legislative Process in the House of Representatives." Chapter 2 in *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the US Congress*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Sinclair, Barbara. 1997. "Routes and Obstacles: The Legislative Process in the Senate." Chapter 3 in *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the US Congress*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

February 7th: Making Public Policy

Davidson and Oleszek, Chapters 13 and 14

February 12~: Midterm Examination

Congress and the Legislative Environment

February 14~: Congress and the President

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 10
- Sinclair, Barbara. 1998. "The Plot Thickens: Congress and the President." Chapter 8 in *Great Theatre*.
- Bond, Jon R. and Richard Fleisher. 2000. "Polarized Politics: Does It Matter?" Chapter 9 in *Polarized Politics: Congress and the President in a Partisan Era*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

February 19th: Congress and the Bureaucracy

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 11 (pp.311-324)
- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1979. "Allocating Benefits." Chapter 4 in *Congress and the Bureaucracy: A Theory of Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

February 21st: Congress and Interest Groups

- Wright, John R. 1996. "Legislative Lobbying." Chapter 4 in *Interest Lobbying, Contributions, and Influence*. New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Groups and Congress:

- Cigler, Allan J. and Burdett C. Loomis. 1999. "From Big Bird to Bill Gates: Organized Interests and the Emergence of Hyperpolitics." Chapter 18 in Cigler and Loomis, eds. *Interest Group Politics*, 5th Ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

February 26~: Public Evaluations of Congress

- **Hibbing, John R. and Elizabeth A. Theiss-Morse.** 1997. "What the Public Dislikes About Congress." Chapter 3 in Dodd and Oppenheimer eds. *Congress Reconsidered*, 6th Ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Patterson, Samuel C. and David C. Kimball. 1998. "Unsympathetic Audience: Citizens' Evaluations of Congress." Chapter 3 in *Great Theatre*.

February 28th: A Day of Rest!

March 1st: Congress is Broken and We Need to Fix It!

- Chapters 1-5 in Rauch, Jonathan. 1999. *Government's End: ~ Washington Stopped Working*. New York: Public Affairs, LLC.

March 7~: Is Congress Really Broken? Should we fix it?

- Chapters 6-10 in *Government's End*.

FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY 5 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14TH