

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 517**  
**CONGRESS AND LEGISLATIVE POLITICS**

Spring Term 2001  
MW 4:30 – 6:18  
160 MacQuigg Laboratory

Mr. Hasecke

Office: 2168 Derby Hall

Office Hours: After Class and by Appointment

Webpage: <http://psweb.sbs.ohio-state.edu/grads/ehasecke/>

Course Homepage: <http://psweb.sbs.ohio-state.edu/grads/ehasecke/congress.htm>

Phone: 292-9499

Email: [hasecke.1@osu.edu](mailto:hasecke.1@osu.edu)

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES:

The U.S. Congress is the least liked branch of the Federal Government. However, it is also the branch that is intended to be the most representative of the people. This term we will explore the concept of representation. Our belief about what makes an ideal representative plays a defining role in determining how we evaluate Congress. Over the term, we will look into the following questions:

- How was Congress originally designed and how did different notions of representation played into the original design?
- What incentives does our system place on members of Congress and do those incentives push members to be the kinds of representatives we want?
- How is Congress organized and why do members of Congress choose to organize the institution in this way?
- What is Congress' role in relation to the other two branches and the bureaucracy?
- What role do interest groups play in Congress?
- How does all of this come together and what does it say about democracy today?

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

There are three required books 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. Davidson, Roger and Walter Oleszek. 1999. *Congress and Its Members*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
2. Patterson, Kelly and Daniel Shea. 2000. *Contemplating the People's Branch: Legislative Dynamics in the Twenty-First Century*. Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
3. Rauch, Jonathan. 1999. *Government's End: Why Washington Stopped Working*. New York: Public Affairs Press, LLC.

*Additional Readings*

There are several additional readings that will be available either through OSU library's "online reserve" or as free downloads on the web. The syllabus on the course webpage has information

and links to where these readings can be found. It is your responsibility to get these readings on your own. If you have any problems, let me know and I can help you get them.

#### EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

##### *Reading and Attendance*

Class will be a mix of lecture and discussion. The lecture will be based on what you have read for class; however, I will often deviate from the book and present additional material for which you are responsible. The reading is intended to provide you with the background information that will be essential for getting the most out of the discussions of theory in class. Lecture will NOT be a simple summary of what you have read. Therefore, **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 will call on students to explain and/or discuss the readings for the class. If you fail to read...

Additionally, I will give **random reading 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. Students who miss a quiz should not expect to take the same quiz as the rest of the class.

##### *Exams*

There will be a midterm essay exam given on April 23. **There is no final exam for this course.** Your research paper (discussed below) will serve as your final. For the midterm, I will give you 6 to 8 questions one week before the exam. These questions will be broad questions that require you to integrate ideas across the readings. On the day of the midterm, I will pick two of the questions and you will be asked to answer both of them. You will be allowed to bring one 5x7 notecard to class that has whatever you want on it (you can use front and back). I suggest that you make outlines of the questions so that you have a guide when you set out to answer the two questions. Because you will have the questions in advance and can bring notecards, I will expect that your essays are well organized, present clear arguments, and make reference to the relevant authors by name.

I expect that all students will take the **exam** at the time it is scheduled. If you cannot avoid missing the exam for a justifiable reason, you must tell me in advance, and I may allow you to take a make-up exam without penalty. Others who miss exams will most often not be allowed to retake the exam; however, if there is a very good reason, you will be allowed to retake the exam with a grade penalty of 5 points for the number of days after the exam that you notified me, including the day of the exam.

##### *Written Assignment*

You will have an extensive **research paper** due on Friday, June 1 at 5pm. In 15-20 pages, you will explore the nature of representation by focusing on the behavior of one Member of Congress. More information will be given out about the final paper as we progress through the quarter.

It is expected that all of your writing will be grammatically correct, rigorously proofread, and free from typical spelling, punctuation, and other such mistakes.

The paper must be turned in on the date it is due. Late 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 turn papers in on the specified date (due to the reasons just mentioned), you must contact me either via e-mail or phone prior to the class. The only exception to this is a **documented emergency** that prevents the student from contacting me. Students who fail to contact me regarding the final paper will not be permitted to turn the paper in and will receive a zero.

### *Grading:*

The assignments above will contribute to your final grade as follows:

10%	Reading quizzes
10%	Participation
35%	Midterm Exam
45%	Final Paper

Students with questions about their grades must contact the instructor. As noted above, late assignments will be penalized and late final papers 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 this class, academic misconduct refers to plagiarism in written assignments such as final papers.

Plagiarism is not only dishonest, but also very unfair to students who do their best to succeed honestly. Consequently, I take such problems very seriously and 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.

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS:

### Introduction

March 26<sup>th</sup>: Introduction and a Trajectory for the Class

### Congressional Origins

March 28<sup>th</sup>: Representation (Theories)

- Patterson and Shea
  - Intro to Part I: Madison Meets the Web
  - Chapter 1: The Design of Popular Government
  - Chapter 2: Representing the People
  - Chapter 4: Groups, Representation, and Race Conscious Districting
  - Chapter 22: Into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

April 2<sup>nd</sup>: Setting up Congress

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 1: The Two Congresses
  - Chapter 2: Evolution of the Modern Congress
- Patterson and Shea
  - Chapter 3: Congress during the Convention and Ratification
- Madison
  - Federalist #10 (online)

### Rational Choice and Members of Congress

April 4<sup>th</sup>: Theoretical Approach to Members

- Mayhew, David. 1975. "The Electoral Incentive." Chapter 1 from *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (online reserve)
- Fenno, Richard. 1977. "U.S. House Members in their Constituencies: An Exploration." *American Political Science Review* 71:883-917. (available online)

### Organizing Congress

April 9<sup>th</sup>: Distributive and Informational Theory

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 7: Committees: Workshops of Congress
- Patterson and Shea
  - Chapter 15: The Driving Force of Bud Shuster

April 11<sup>th</sup>: Congress as a Majoritarian Institution

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 8: Congressional Rules and Procedures

April 16<sup>th</sup>: Party Theory

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 6: Leaders and Parties in Congress
- 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. (online reserve)

April 18<sup>th</sup>: Party Theory Continued

- Patterson and Shea
  - Chapter 11: Transformational Leader or Faithful Agent?
  - Chapter 13: House Broken
  - Chapter 18: Congressional Leadership of Public Opinion

April 23<sup>rd</sup>: **Midterm**

### **Congress and the Legislative Environment**

April 25<sup>th</sup>: A Day of Rest (and research)!!

April 30<sup>th</sup>: Presidential and Judicial relations

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 10: Congress and the President
  - Chapter 11: Congress, the Bureaucracy, and the Courts
    - Pages 330 – 333
- Patterson and Shea
  - Chapter 16: Separate but Equal Branches
- **Final Paper topic due**

May 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bureaucratic Oversight

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 11: Congress, the Bureaucracy, and the Courts
    - Pages 311- 330
- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1979. "Allocating Benefits." Chapter 4 in *Congress and the Bureaucracy: A Theory of Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (online reserve)

### **Information and the Decisions members make**

May 7<sup>th</sup>: Principal Agent Theory and The Role of Interest Groups

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 12: Congress and Organized Interests
- John Wright. "Legislative Lobbying." Chapter 4 in *Interest Groups and Congress: Lobbying, Contributions, and Influence*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. (online reserve)

May 9<sup>th</sup>: Participation and Voting Decisions

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 9: Decision-Making in Congress
- Patterson and Shea
  - Introduction to Part IV: Purists and Pragmatists
  - Chapter 17: Participation in Congress

## **Elections**

May 14<sup>th</sup>: Electoral Strategies and how people vote

- Davidson and Oleszek
  - Chapter 4: Making It: The Electoral Game
- Patterson and Shea
  - Introduction to Part II: Congressional Elections
  - Chapter 6: The Strategic Context of Congressional Elections

May 16<sup>th</sup>: Campaign Finance

- Patterson and Shea
  - Chapter 7: The Day after Reform
- Nathaniel Welch. "The More Money You Raise, the More Your Opponent Gets." *George*. November 2000, pp. 48-50. (online reserve)
- McCain-Feingold (available online)

## **Evaluating Congress Today**

May 21<sup>st</sup>: Hyperpluralism

- Rauch
  - Chapters 1-4

May 23<sup>rd</sup>: Demosclerosis

- Rauch
  - Chapters 5-8

May 28<sup>th</sup>: no class

May 30<sup>th</sup>: Reform?

- Rauch
  - Chapters 9-10

June 1 Final paper due