Political Science 3424: Congress and the Legislative Process
University of Central Florida
Spring 2018
Instructor: John Hanley

Class Meetings: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:30-12:20PM, Business Administration I
Office Hours: HPH 306, Mon. 1:30-2:30, Wednesday 12-2, Friday 9-10; or by appointment.
While I have always had an excellent record of holding class, my wife and I are expecting our first child in late March/early April, making it possible that at some point I will simply go missing from campus. If I have not arrived to class or an office hours appointment within 5-10 minutes of the scheduled time, please excuse yourself with my apologies.
Email via webcourses Phone: 407-823-3329

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is a comprehensive survey of the contemporary U.S. Congress. We begin by analyzing the design of Congress, congressional elections, the connections between elections and governance, and how members of Congress represent their states and districts. We then turn to the organization of Congress, focusing on the interplay between political parties and congressional committees. We will take stock of the changes in the operation of the House and Senate, especially problems associated with extended debate in the Senate. We will then analyze the legislative process, congressional budgeting, interest group influence, and the interaction between the Congress and the White House. The place of Congress in the U.S. separation of powers system will be a theme throughout the course.

Class sessions will include both lecture and discussion. It is important that you keep up with the assigned reading in order to understand the lectures and participate in class discussions. Political science scholarship will help us to interpret and explain current congressional politics, so you should follow current events involving Congress. We will often begin class with a discussion of "what's happening in Congress." I recommend reading a good daily news source such as *The New York Times* or *Washington Post,* along with Congress-specific news sources such as *CQ Weekly* and *The Hill*.

COURSE TEXT

Available at the campus bookstore and online booksellers:
Davidson, Roger H., Walter J. Oleszek, Frances E. Lee, and Eric Schickler. 2018. *Congress and Its Members*. 16th ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press. ISBN 978-1506369730
You may prefer to purchase a used copy of a recent edition—this will likely suffice for the purposes of the course, but you are responsible for any and all deviations from the 13th edition.

There are also additional readings, which will be made available in pdf on webcourses.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

The following will make up your course grade:

- Syllabus quiz (2%)
- Two short assignments (20% total)
- One group project and presentation (15%)
- Two midterm exams (20%)
- Final exam (25%)
- Class attendance and participation (18%)

COURSE POLICIES

If you wish to have an assignment re-assessed due to a possible grading error, it is your obligation to compose a short memo identifying the alleged mistake(s).

Incomplete grades, changes in exam dates, and extensions of written assignments will be approved only by the instructor, and only upon evidence of extenuating circumstances.

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need specific access in this course, such as accommodations, should contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss various access options. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (Ferrell Commons, 7F, Room 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone (407) 823-2371). Through Student Accessibility Services, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential access and accommodations that might be reasonable.

Academic dishonesty will result in grade reduction or a failing grade for the course. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, or any other act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. In addition to the above, it constitutes cheating to provide false or misleading information to receive a postponement or extension on a test or assignment, or to submit essentially the same written assignment for two different courses (without prior permission) of faculty members.

Electronic devices—including laptops—are strongly discouraged in class except by the special permission of the instructor. Aside from the more obvious evils of texting and online video, these devices affect note-taking and classroom participation. See http://nyr.kr/1i91izA for a recent discussion of this phenomenon.

A SAMPLE OF ONLINE RESOURCES

U.S. House of Representatives http://www.house.gov
U.S. Senate http://www.senate.gov
Library of Congress http://www.loc.gov
THOMAS – Legislative Information http://thomas.loc.gov
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranch.html
Congressional Research Service reports:

http://www.rules.house.gov/archives/crs_reports.htm
Federal Election Commission http://www.fec.gov
The Hill http://www.thehill.com
C-SPAN http://www.cspan.org
http://www.c-span.org/resources/congress.asp
CQ Weekly Report http://library.cqpress.com/cqweekly/ (through SU library)
News Coverage:
New York Times: http://www.nytimes.com
Washington Post: http://www.washingtonpost.com
Party Organizations:
DSCC: http://www.dscc.org/
NRSC: http://www.nrsc.org/
DCCC: http://www.democraticaction.org/
NRCC: http://nrcc.org/
Campaign Finance:
FEC: http://www.fec.gov/
Open Secrets: http://www.opensecrets.org/
Campaign Finance Institute: http://www.cfinst.org/
Political Money Line: http://politicalmoneyline.com/
Brookings Institution: http://www.brookings.edu/gs/cf/cf_hp.htm

I. Organizational Meeting and Constitutional Background

January 8: Course introduction – From the Gadsden Mall to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act

- Complete the exercise at http://www.crfb.org/debtfixer/
- David Smith. 2017. "Steve Bannon may have lost the battle in Alabama but his GOP civil war goes on." https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/dec/31/steve-bannon-may-have-lost-the-battle-in-alabama-but-his-gop-civil-war-goes-on

January 10-12: The Constitution and Representation

- Herbert J. Storing, ed. *The Anti-Federalist*. Letter from the Federal Farmer to the Republican, #7; and Melancton Smith address, pp. 338-47. [P]
- Federalist papers 10, 35, 57 [P]
- Davidson et al., Chapter 1.

January 15: No Class (Martin Luther King, Jr., Day)

January 17-19: The Constitution and Separation of Powers

- Constitution of the United States (Article 1; Article 2, sec. 1-3) [P]
- Davidson et al., Chapter 2
- Federalist papers 47 and 51. [P]

II. Congressional Elections and Representation

January 22-26: Representation and The Logic(s) of Congressional Elections

- Charles Stewart, *Analyzing Congress*, New York: Norton, 2001, pp. 3-14. [P]

- Richard Fenno. *Home Style: Members in Their Districts*, pp. 136-169.
- David Mayhew, *The Electoral Connection* (excerpts published in *The American Congress Reader*, edited by Steven Smith and Jason Roberts). [P]

January 29-February 2: Recruitment, Incumbency, and Campaign Finance

- Davidson et al., Chapter 3, pp. 62-71.
- Ryan Grim and Sabrina Siddiqui, "Call Time For Congress Shows How Fundraising Dominates Bleak Work Life," *Huffington Post*, January 8, 2013. [P]
- Alex Isenstadt, "GOP Frosh Come up Short on Cash," *Politico*, October 16, 2011. [P]

SHORT ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE 2/5

February 5-7: Reapportionment and Redistricting

- Davidson et al., pp. 43-62.
- Alan Abramowitz, et. al., "Don't Blame Redistricting for Uncompetitive Elections," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 2006: 87-90. [P]
- Bernard Grofman. 2017. "The Supreme Court will examine partisan gerrymandering in 2017. That could change the voting map." *Washington Post*, January 17, 2017.

February 9-12: Representation: Race, Class, and Gender

- Michele Swers. 2002. The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. 32-56. [P]
- Jane Mansbridge. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women?" *Journal of Politics*, 1999, pp. 628-657. [P]
- John Sides, "Social Status and How the Elected Vote," *New York Times Fivethirtyeight Blog*, September 12, 2011. http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/09/12/social-status-of-members-of-congress-shifts-policy-toward-rich/ [P]

FIRST MIDTERM 2/12

February 14-16: Interpreting Congressional Elections

- Davidson et al., Chapter 4.
- Gary Jacobson, "Referendum: The 2006 Midterm Congressional Elections," *Political Science Quarterly*, Spring 2007, pp. 1-24. [P]
- Vanessa Williamson, Theda Skocpol, and John Coggin. 2011. "The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism," *Perspectives on Politics*, March 2011, pp. 25-43. [P]

III. Congressional Organization: Parties and Committees

February 19-21: The Spatial Theory of Voting and Polarization

- Charles Stewart, *Analyzing Congress*, New York: Norton, 2001, REVIEW: pp. 3-14 and READ: 257-67. [P]

- Nolan McCarty, Keith Poole, and Howard Rosenthal, *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. MIT Press, 2006, pp. 15-34. [P]

February 23-26: Party Leadership in Congress
- Davidson et al., Chapter 6.

February 28-March 2: The Revival of Party Government
- John H. Aldrich and David W. Rohde, "The Logic of Conditional Party Government: Revisiting the Electoral Connection," *Congress Reconsidered*, 7th edition, 2001, pp. 269-92. [P]
- Tim Alberta, "John Boehner Unchained" *Politico*, October 27, 2017 [P]

March 5-9: Polarization and the "Dysfunctional" Senate
- Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee, Chapter 8.
- Barbara Sinclair. "Senate Parties and Party Leadership, 1960-2010," in *The U.S. Senate: From Deliberation to Dysfunction*, ed. By Burdett A. Loomis, pp. 85-109. [P]
- Sarah Binder. "Through the Looking Glass, Darkly: What Has Become of the Senate?" *Forum*, December 2011. [P]
- Huder, Joshua. 2017. "The Housification of the Upper Chamber." *Legbranch.com*. http://www.legbranch.com/theblog/2017/12/21/the-housification-of-the-upper-chamber-the-115th-senate-is-basically-unrecognizable

SHORT ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE 3/9

March 12-16 SPRING BREAK

March 19-23: The Committee System
- Davidson et al., chapter 7.
- John H. Aldrich and David W. Rohde, "Congressional Committees in a Continuing Partisan Era," in Dodd and Oppenheimer, *Congress Reconsidered*, 9th ed., pp. 217-40. [P]
- Don Wolfensberger. "Weak Committees Empower the Partisans." *Roll Call*, November 8, 2011. [P]

IV. Congress and Policy-making

March 26-28: The Budget Process and Domestic Policy-Making
- Davidson et al., Chapter 14.
- Jackie Calmes and Jennifer Steinhauer, "As Sides Dig In, Panel on Deficit Has an Uphill Fight," *New York Times*, September 25, 2011. [P]
- Michael Tanner, "Aren't Republicans Supposed to Care About the Deficit?" *National Review*, November 1, 2017. [P]

SECOND MIDTERM 3/30

March 30-April 2: Legislating Together (and Apart): Congress and the President

- Davidson et al., chapter 10.
- Steven T. Dennis and Kathleen Hunter, "Divided Government Could Produce Deals," *Roll Call*, January 20, 2011. [P]
- Sarah A. Binder. "Elections and Congress's Governing Capacity," *Extensions*, Fall 2005. [P]

April 4-6: Congress and Foreign Policy

- Louis Fisher, *The Politics of Shared Power*, Texas A&M Press, 1998, chapter 6. [P]
- William G. Howell and Jon C. Pevehouse, "When Congress Stops Wars," *Foreign Affairs*, September / October 2007. [P]
- Louis Fisher and Ryan Hendrickson, "Congress at War," *Foreign Affairs*, May-June 2008 (Letter to editor in response to Howell and Pevehouse). [P]

April 9-11: Congress and the Bureaucracy

- Davidson et al., Chapter 11.
- Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get it Back on Track*. Oxford University Press, 2006, Ch. 5, pp. 141-162. [P]

April 13-16: The Role of Organized Interests

- Davidson et al., Chapter 13.
- Richard L. Hall and Frank W. Wayman, "Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees," in *The American Congress Reader*, Steven S. Smith, Jason M. Roberts, and Ryan J. Vander Wielen, eds., pp. 401-13. [P]

April 18-20: Group Presentations

April 23: The State of Congress: Evaluations and Reflections

- Davidson et al., Chapter 16.
- John R. Hibbing and Christopher Larimer, "The American Public's View of Congress," *The Forum*, vol. 6, July 2008. [P]
- David Mayhew, "Actions in the Public Sphere," in Sarah Binder and Paul Quirk, eds., *The Legislative Branch*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. [P]

Exam
Wednesday, April 25, 10am-12:50