

POLITICAL SCIENCE 311-002: THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

SPRING 2019

SYLLABUS

Instructor: Michael S. Rocca, Associate Professor
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Lectures: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30pm-1:45pm, Education 101
Office Hours: Wednesday, 9:00am-12:00pm
Course Website: learn.unm.edu

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This course is designed to meet two goals. First, I hope to increase your understanding of Congress as a legislative institution. Over the course of the quarter we will review how and why Congress is organized the way it is and how the rules of the game influence the legislative process. For instance, what is the purpose of the committee system? What role do the parties play within Congress? How do congressional leaders influence policy? We will also pay close attention to the behavior of the individual member of Congress. Specifically, we will discuss how and why members participate in the legislative process. What motivates members of Congress? And what role does institutional status play in their levels of participation?

The second purpose of this course is to introduce you to important theoretical and empirical works on Congress. Each week we will discuss some of the most influential debates in congressional literature. I hope these topics will introduce you to how scholars think about Congress and familiarize you with important concepts and ideas in the political science discipline. For instance, are members of Congress single-minded reelection seekers or do other goals also drive their behavior? And which theory best explains how committees are formed?

REQUIRED READINGS

Davidson, Roger H., Walter J. Oleszek, Frances Lee and Eric Schickler. 2018. *Congress and Its Members*, 16th ed. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly.

- <http://www.facultybookshelf.org/course/17297>

Mayew, David. 2001 (1974). *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, 2nd edition. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Weekly readings, available on our course website or JSTOR.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The students will demonstrate an ability to think critically regarding political problems, trends, and developments.
- The students will demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively.
- The students will demonstrate strong analytical writing skills.
- The students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of fundamental concepts and theories in political science.
- The students will be able to apply political science theories and/or concepts to real-world cases or be able to apply a case or set of cases using an appropriate theory.
- The students will be able to evaluate theories, either in light of empirical evidence or on

theoretical grounds.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation

Regular attendance is expected of you for this class. Learning the material and performance in the course are both greatly affected by your attendance and engagement. Discussion and dialogue among students and the instructor about course concepts, current and past events related to the presidency, and course readings are strongly encouraged. Respect for others' opinions is an essential part of a university education – disagreements should be voiced in a courteous and civil manner.

Exams

There will be three exams, each worth 100 points. See the course plan below for the tentative exam dates. Make-up exams will be offered only for those students who cannot take the exams at the scheduled times for well substantiated reasons of health and personal emergency. Excuses must be cleared with the instructor prior to the exam. If a student fails to make-up the exam within one week of the regularly scheduled exam date, or misses the agreed upon make-up exam time, s/he will receive a zero on that exam. The format of the exams will be in-class essays. The essay will be graded on criteria provided on the “Exam Essay Rubric/Expectations” provided on our class website.

- Re-grading Policy: If you have a question about a grade, you must provide me with a written explanation of your concerns. I re-grade the entire assignment/test. You will receive the new grade – higher or lower. You will have 7 days from the day the exam is returned to submit a request for a re-grade. Note that the clock starts on the day that the exam is returned in class – *not* on the day you actually receive the exam (in the event you miss that class). I will not accept requests more than 7 days after they are returned.

Writing Assignment

There is one writing assignment during the semester, worth 100 points. The subject of the assignment will be part one of David Mayhew’s classic book, *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. It is due **Sunday, February 10th at 11:59pm**. The assignment instructions and grading rubric can be found on our Learn website. Late policy: 5 points will be deducted from the total score for every day that the assignment is late.

Bonus Points

Bonus points (i.e. extra credit) will occasionally be given throughout the semester for in-class assignments. Opportunities for bonus points will not be announced and will happen at the instructor’s discretion. Bonus point will never work *against* a student – it will only add to and *help* students’ total course grade. Students must be present (in class) to receive bonus points.

Grading

The maximum score you can receive is 400 points (three exams each worth 100 points plus the 100-point assignment). Here is the course grade breakdown:

<u>Point Breakdown</u>	<u>Percentage Breakdown</u>
387 – 400 = A+	97% – 100% = A+
370 – 386 = A	93% – 96% = A
358 – 369 = A-	90% – 92% = A-
346 – 357 = B+	87% – 89% = B+
330 – 345 = B	83% – 86% = B

318 – 329 = B-

80% – 82% = B-

306 – 317 = C+

77% – 79% = C+

290 – 305 = C

73% – 76% = C

278 – 289 = C-

70% – 72% = C-

266 – 277 = D+

67% – 69% = D+

250 – 265 = D

63% – 66% = D

238 – 249 = D-

60% – 62% = D-

Less than 238 = F

Less than 60% = F

CLASS POLICIES

- Please check the course website every week. The course site is on learn.unm.edu
- My PowerPoint presentations are intended to facilitate your note-taking and studying. During class, I will move at my own pace – if you have trouble keeping up with lecture, please see me for some helpful note-taking hints. Please note that the slides presented in class are my *lecture notes* so they are at times fairly detailed. My advice is to write down key concepts in class and fill in the blanks later.
- Please turn your cell phones off before coming to class. And please no texting in class.
- Please do not use laptops for anything other than taking notes during class.
- Please show up to class on time, and please do not leave class until lecture is complete (unless for an emergency, to use the restroom or with prior approval by the professor).
- **The best way to talk about class issues is to drop by my office hours. Email is not a good way to contact me.**
- Email Policy: (1) Email should be primarily used for procedural reasons (e.g. setting up a meeting, asking about an exam date) and *not* for substantive reasons (e.g. help with a course concept). (2) While I will respond to emails as quickly as I can, it is difficult to stay on top of emails with so many students across multiple courses. Please be patient, as my response time will vary from week-to-week. (3) Please utilize a formal, professional style when writing an email as opposed to an informal, text-like style.
- If you have a serious problem, you should contact me IMMEDIATELY. I can do more to help you if you let me know what is happening before you miss deadlines.
- Questions are ALWAYS appropriate.
- I encourage students to challenge the ideas discussed in this class. In all discussion, everyone must provide his or her fellow students with full respect and courtesy.
- Cheating and plagiarism will be punished to the fullest extent possible.
- All lectures, handouts, assignments and exams are the property of the professor and may not be published on the web or in any other manner without permission.

- Our classroom and our university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, harassment, or violence. Should you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access the resources available to you on campus, especially the LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center and the support services listed on its website (<http://loborespect.unm.edu/>).

ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

In accordance with University Policy 2310 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she are not legally permitted to inquire. Students who may require assistance in emergency evacuations should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow. Contact Accessibility Resource Center at 277-3506 for additional information.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or otherwise fails to meet the standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in course work may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

TITLE IX STATEMENT

A Note About Sexual Violence and Sexual Misconduct: As a UNM faculty member, I am required to inform the Title IX Coordinator at the Office of Equal Opportunity (oeo.unm.edu) of any report I receive of gender discrimination which includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and/or sexual violence. You can read the full campus policy regarding sexual misconduct at <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html>. If you have experienced sexual violence or sexual misconduct, please ask a faculty or staff member for help or contact the [LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center](#).

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

I. IN SEARCH OF TWO CONGRESSES

TOPIC ONE: THE TWO CONGRESSES AND THEIR EVOLUTION

Required Reading: Chapters 1 & 2

Diversity in Congress "A Historic New Congress Will Be Sworn in Today" (Vox.com)
<https://www.vox.com/2018/12/6/18119733/congress-diversity-women-election-good-news>

“Having the Most Diverse Congress Ever Will Affect More than Just Legislation.” (The Monkey Cage)
https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2019/01/09/having-the-most-diverse-congress-ever-will-affect-more-than-just-legislation/?utm_term=.79d101315846

TOPIC TWO: THE ELECTORAL CONNECTION

Required Reading: David Mayhew’s *The Electoral Connection*, Part I

****Mayhew Writing Assignment: Due by Sunday, February 10th, 11:59pm.**
Submit on Learn website

II. A CONGRESS OF AMBASSADORS

TOPIC THREE: RECRUITMENT AND CANDIDACY

Required Reading: Chapter 3

Gerrymandering “Hating Gerrymandering is Easy, Fixing It Is Harder”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/hating-gerrymandering-is-easy-fixing-it-is-harder/>

“Ending Gerrymandering Won’t Fix What Ails America”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/ending-gerrymandering-wont-fix-what-ails-america/>

“The Atlas of Redistricting” (Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/redistricting-maps/>

“Here’s How the Supreme Court Could Decide Whether Your Vote Will Count” (*Washington Post*)
https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/politics/courts-law/gerrymander/?utm_term=.75ddec1b86df

TOPIC FOUR: THE ELECTORAL GAME

Required Reading: Chapter 4

2018 Midterm “Why Did the House Get Bluer and the Senate Get Redder?”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-did-the-house-get-bluer-and-the-senate-get-redder/>

“There Was a lot of Turnover in the House in the 2018 Cycle”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/retirements-resignations-and-electoral-losses-the-104-house-members-who-wont-be-back-next-year/>

“America’s Electoral Map is Changing” (Fivethirtyeight.com)

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/americas-electoral-map-is-changing/>

“How Red-State Democrats Became an Endangered Species in the Senate” (Fivethirtyeight.com)

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-red-state-democrats-became-an-endangered-species-in-the-senate/>

TOPIC FIVE: HILL SYTTLES AND HOME STYLES

Required Reading: Chapter 5

Legislative Styles

“Five Legislative Styles of Members of Congress” (Legbranch.com)

<http://www.legbranch.com/theblog/2017/11/20/five-legislative-styles-of-members-of-congress>

****First exam will cover chapters 3-5, tentatively week eight**

III. A DELIBERATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONE NATION

TOPIC SIX: LEADERS AND PARTIES

Required Reading: Chapter 6

David Mayhew’s *The Electoral Connection*, Part II

Party Leaders

“Republicans Were More United Than Ever Under John Boehner. But Only Against Democrats” (Fivethirtyeight.com)

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/republicans-were-more-united-than-ever-under-john-boehner/>

“Paul Ryan Gave Up One of the Most Powerful Jobs in Politics. It Totally Makes Sense” (Fivethirtyeight.com)

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/paul-ryan-gave-up-one-of-the-most-powerful-jobs-in-politics-it-totally-makes-sense/>

“How Nancy Pelosi Overcame her Opposition and Became House Speaker. Again.” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2019/01/04/this-explains-why-nancy-pelosi-became-house-speaker-again-despite-opposition/?utm_term=.3b9e6aa8816d

TOPIC SEVEN: COMMITTEES

Required Reading: Chapter 7

In Committee

The 10 New Democratic House Committee Chairs Who Are About to Make Trump’s Life Hell.” (Vox.com)

<https://www.vox.com/2019/1/3/18134919/congress-house-2019-committee-investigations-trump-impeachment>

“How Term Limits for Committee Chairs Make Congress Less Effective.” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/01/04/how-term-limits-for-committee-chairs-make-congress-less-effective/?utm_term=.1aed9773d15b

“Congress Just Doesn’t Know Enough To Do Its Job Well. Here’s Why.” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/14/congress-just-doesnt-know-enough-to-do-its-job-well-heres-why/?utm_term=.d52e4b3eeb3a

TOPIC EIGHT: RULES AND PROCEDURES

Required Reading: Chapter 8

Productivity

“Plenty of Congressional Hearings Are Not Circuses. Here’s How We Know.” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/08/14/plenty-of-congressional-hearings-are-not-circuses-heres-how-we-know/?utm_term=.0159aef9c8c1

“How Political Polarization Creates Stalemate and Undermines Lawmaking” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/01/13/how-political-polarization-creates-stalemate-and-undermines-lawmaking/?utm_term=.9a0ddfb849e2

TOPIC NINE: DELIBERATION

Required Reading: Chapter 9

Polarization

“Polarization in Congress Has Risen Sharply. Where is it Going Next?” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/02/13/polarization-in-congress-has-risen-sharply-where-is-it-going-next/?utm_term=.5bf9e1a0c48

“Politics is More Partisan Now but It’s Not More Divisive” (Fivethirtyeight.com)

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/politics-is-more-partisan-now-but-its-not-more-divisive/>

“Congress is More Bipartisan Than You Think” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/04/congress-is-more-bipartisan-than-you-think/?utm_term=.2367ad96c95c

“Why Fights Over Immigration Keep Shutting Down the Government” (Fivethirtyeight.com)

<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-fights-over-immigration-keep-shutting-down-the-government/>

****Second exam will cover chapters 6-9 and Mayhew Part II, tentatively week twelve**

IV. POLICY MAKING AND CHANGE IN THE TWO CONGRESSES

TOPIC TEN: CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT

Required Reading: Chapters 10 & 15

Presidential Support “Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump” (Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/congress-trump-score/>

“GOP Criticism of Trump is All Talk but It Still Matters”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/gop-criticism-of-trump-is-all-talk-but-it-still-matters/>

“Republicans in Congress Have Been Very Loyal to Trump. Will it Last?” (Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/republicans-in-congress-have-been-very-loyal-to-trump-will-it-last/>

TOPIC TWELVE: CONGRESS AND THE COURTS

Required Reading: Chapter 12

Supreme Court Justices “Will Any Republicans Vote Against Trump’s Eventual Supreme Court Pick”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/will-any-republicans-vote-against-trumps-eventual-supreme-court-pick/>

“How Brett Kavanaugh Would Change the Supreme Court”
(Fivethirtyeight.com)
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-brett-kavanaugh-would-change-the-supreme-court/>

TOPIC THIRTEEN: CONGRESS AND ORGANIZED INTERESTS

Required Reading: Chapter 13

Money and Lobbying “The More Outside Money Politicians Take, the Less Well They Represent Their Constituents” (The Monkey Cage)
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp>

[/2016/08/17/members-of-congress-follow-the-money-not-the-voters-heres-the-evidence/?utm_term=.ca6dd247a284](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2016/08/17/members-of-congress-follow-the-money-not-the-voters-heres-the-evidence/?utm_term=.ca6dd247a284)

“A New Experiment Shows How Money Buys Access to Congress” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2015/04/29/the-solution-to-lobbying-is-more-lobbying/?utm_term=.67716c065cb2

“The Solution To Lobbying Is More Lobbying” (The Monkey Cage)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/03/11/a-new-experiment-shows-how-money-buys-access-to-congress/>

TOPIC FOURTEEN: CONGRESS, BUDGETS AND DOMESTIC POLICY

Required Reading: Chapter 14

Budget Process

“Why the Budget Process is Broken” (The Monkey Cage)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/10/27/this-is-why-the-congressional-budget-process-is-broken/?utm_term=.ff15df608d78

Time permitting, we will also cover this topic:

TOPIC ELEVEN: CONGRESS AND THE BUREAUCRACY

Required Reading: Chapter 11

****Third exam will cover chapters 10, 12, 13, 14 & 15, during finals week**