

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS  
(Political Science 345 L32)

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Spring 2013  
Mon/Wed 1:00-2:30  
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course website: <http://pages.wustl.edu/rogowski/legislative-process>  
course blog: <http://legislativeprocesswustl.blogspot.com>

**PURPOSE.** This course examines legislative politics in the United States, focusing mostly (though not exclusively) on the U.S. Congress. Much of the course is devoted to tracing the development of legislative institutions and examining their effects on policymaking. We will also investigate how factors external to legislatures—including the executive branch, the courts, and the public—affect the dynamics of legislative politics. The course is oriented around the following main concepts:

1. Political preferences: how are legislators elected into office, and what explains their behavior as members of a legislative body?
2. Political institutions: what are the “rules of the game,” and how and why have they changed over time?
3. Political outcomes: how does the combination of preferences and institutions help us to understand when new laws are passed and (just as importantly) when they are not? And, as just one political actor among many, what institutions besides legislatures affect the policymaking process?

The course's goal is to help us come to a deeper understanding of the complexities of legislative politics. Along the way we will address some of the core themes of democratic government, including representation, legitimacy, and accountability.

This is a survey, lecture-based course. The assigned readings are somewhat extensive (typically 75-100 pages per week), and the lectures will cover even more material. Attendance at all lectures is a natural expectation of the course, as students are responsible for all readings as well as the material presented in lecture.

**COURSE TEXTBOOKS.** The material for this course will rely primarily on two texts, available in the campus bookstore:

Steven S. Smith, Jason M. Roberts, and Ryan J. Vander Wielen. *The American Congress*, 7th Edition. Cambridge University Press.

Charles M. Stewart, III. *Analyzing Congress*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Norton.

I will also assign a number of journal articles and books chapters in addition to these textbooks. These assignments are posted online on the course website. All readings should be completed **prior** to that lecture.

**REQUIREMENTS.** Each student's grade will be based on the following components:

(a)	Mid-term exam (February 27)	25% of grade
(b)	Final exam (April 24)	25% of grade
(c)	Course paper (due on April 19)	25% of grade
(d)	Group blogging project (throughout the course)	25% of grade

Students cannot pass the course without completing *all* four components. I reserve the right to change due dates, with sufficient notice, depending upon the course's progress.

*Exams.* Both exams will be administered in class. The exams will not be designed to test your memorization of the material presented in the course, but rather will examine how critically you have thought about the core concepts discussed in class and your ability to apply them to the study of legislative politics. The midterm exam will cover material from the first half of the course (through February 25). The final exam will ask you to think comprehensively about what you have learned throughout the course, but with an emphasis on the material from the second half.

*Course paper.* The course paper should be 8-10 pages typed, double-spaced, and with 1" margins. The paper should address some sort of institutional reform that has implications for Congress or state legislatures. Examples include electoral reforms (e.g., partisan vs. nonpartisan elections), the design of legislature institutions (e.g., unicameralism vs. bicameralism), changes in legislative rules or procedures (e.g., the cloture rule), etc. Final papers should address the institutional context in which reform might be (or is being) discussed, what would be necessary for it to occur, the likely consequences of such reform, and your argument about whether or not the reform should be implemented. One page summaries (HARD COPIES ONLY) of your research topic should be handed in on March 6. Final papers should be submitted via email to both me and the TA by the date of our scheduled final exam (I will let you know as soon as I know this information). Please take advantage of office hours with your TA and me to discuss your paper.

*Group project.* The legislative process receives lots of attention from the media. Unfortunately, much of this coverage overlooks basic facts of institutional design that have important implications for how and why policy change occurs (or fails to occur). The goal of this project is for you to apply your knowledge of the material from the course to the real (and often messy) world of politics. An excellent example of the basic idea for this project can be found at <http://www.themonkeycage.org>. You should form groups containing between two and four students (please, no exceptions) with whom you will work together on a blog project this semester. You may use any platform to host

your blog. For instance, the course blog was created using <http://www.blogger.com>.

Each group should focus their blog on either a **nationally significant area of legislation currently under consideration by the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress**, or a **state legislature of your choosing**. During the semester, you will be responsible for monitoring media coverage of your chosen subject area and writing blog posts that reflect thoughtful application of our class material to the subject you have chosen. (For instance, if you have chosen to follow the Alabama state legislature, you might discuss how the governor's reported opposition to a particular bill will shape the legislature's behavior since a gubernatorial veto can be overridden by a simple majority.) **Again, your job is to lend insightful, critical commentary to current events in legislative politics.**

Each student will be responsible for authoring **six** blog posts over the course of the semester. Generally speaking, blog posts should be about 500 words in length, but can be as long or as short as you'd like so long as you say something insightful and can keep your readers engaged. Groups should coordinate their efforts so that there is at least one post per week. Furthermore, students should regularly visit their classmates' blogs. Each student is required to post **at least 10 comments** on their classmates' blog postings. All posts and comments should be clearly identified with your name.

By Friday, January 25, one member from each group should email the following information to the TA: names of all members of the group; the blog URL; and the blog's subject matter.

Group projects require the full commitment and participation of all group members. Please come see me immediately if there are any concerns about this issue. At the end of the course each student will anonymously rate the level of participation from each group member.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** Students will be bound by the University's academic integrity policy (available at: <http://academicintegrity.wustl.edu/policy>). Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this policy.

## COURSE OUTLINE

January 14 Introduction

January 16 The Spatial Model

- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 1

January 21 Holiday, No Class

January 23 Congress and the Constitution

- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 2
- The American Congress, Chapter 1 (skim), Chapter 2 (30-44)

*January 25: Email TA with information on group project*

January 28 Historical Developments, Part I

- The American Congress, Chapter 2 (45-53)
- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 3

January 30 Historical Developments, Part II

- Binder, Sarah. 1996. "The Partisan Basis of Procedural Choice: Allocating Parliamentary Rights in the U.S. House, 1789-1990." *American Political Science Review* 90: 8-20.
- Polsby, Nelson. 1968. "The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives." *American Political Science Review* 62: 144-168.
- Schickler, Eric. 2000. "Institutional Change in the House of Representatives, 1867-1998: A Test of Partisan and Ideological Power Balance Models." *American Political Science Review* 94: 269-288.

February 4 Congressional Elections, Part I

- The American Congress, Chapter 3
- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 5

February 6 Congressional Elections, Part II

- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 6
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Snyder Jr., and Charles Stewart III. 2001. "Candidate Positioning in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 136-159.

February 11

Congressional Elections, Part III

- Jacobson, Gary C. 1989. "Strategic Politicians and the Dynamics of U.S. House Elections, 1946-86." *American Political Science Review* 83: 773-793.
- Cox, Gary W., and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *American Journal of Political Science* 40: 478-497.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 1990. "The Effects of Campaign Spending in House Elections: New Evidence for Old Arguments." *American Journal of Political Science* 34: 334-362.

February 13

Representation, Part 1

- Mayhew, David. 1974. *The Election Connection*. Chapter 1.
- The American Congress, Chapter 4

February 18

Representation, Part 2

- Sulkin, Tracy, and Nathaniel Swigger. 2008. "Is There Truth in Advertising? Campaign Ad Images as Signals about Legislative Behavior." *Journal of Politics* 70: 232-244.
- Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. "Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent Yes." *Journal of Politics* 61: 628-657.
- Anzia, Sarah F., and Christopher R. Berry. 2011. "The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect: Why Do Congresswomen Outperform Congressmen?" *American Journal of Political Science* 55: 478-493.
- Cameron, Charles, David Epstein and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1996. "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?" *American Political Science Review* 90: 794-812.

February 20

Parties in Congress

- The American Congress, Chapter 5
- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 7.

February 25

Committees in Congress

- The American Congress, Chapter 6
- Barry R. Weingast and William C. Marshall. 1988. "The Industrial Organization of Congress, or, Why Legislatures, Like Firms, Are Not Organized as Markets." *Journal of Political Economy* 96: 132-163.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1991. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Chapter XX.

February 27

Midterm Exam

March 4 Rules of the Game

- The American Congress, Chapter 7.
- Sinclair, Barbara. 2007. *Unorthodox Lawmaking*. Chapter 6.

March 6 The Congressional Agenda

- Walter J. Oleszek. 2010. *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*. Chapter 3.
- Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda*. Chapter 2.

*Research Paper topics due (one page)*

March 11 and 13 SPRING BREAK – ENJOY!

March 18 Roll Call Votes

- The American Congress, Chapter 8
- Analyzing Congress, Chapter 9 (stop at page 373)

March 20 Policymaking

- Mayhew, David. 2005 [1991]. *Divided We Govern*. Chapter 1.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics*. Chapters 1 and 2.

March 25 Institutions and Obstructionism

- Koger, Gregory. 2006. “Cloture Reform and Party Government in the Senate, 1918-1925.” *Journal of Politics* 68: 708-719.
- Schickler, Eric, and Gregory J. Wawro. 2004. ‘Where’s the Pivot? Obstruction and Lawmaking in the Pre-cloture Senate.’ *American Journal of Political Science* 48: 758-774.

March 27 No class

April 1 The Budgetary Process, Part I

- Walter J. Oleszek. 2010. *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*. Chapter 2.

April 3 The Budgetary Process, Part II

- The American Congress, Chapter 12.

April 8

Lobbying and Interest Groups

- The American Congress, Chapter 11.
- Hall, Richard, and Alan Deardorf. 2006. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* 100: 69-84.

April 10

Executive-Legislative Relations

- The American Congress, Chapter 9.
- Canes-Wrone Brandice. 2001. "The President's Legislative Influence from Public Appeals." *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 319-329.
- Howell, William G., and Jon C. Rogowski. 2013. "War, the Presidency, and Legislative Voting Behavior." *American Journal of Political Science*.
- Cameron, Charles, and Nolan McCarty. 2004. "Models of Vetoes and Veto Bargaining." *Annual Review of Politics* 7: 409-435.

April 15

Congress and the Courts

- The American Congress, Chapter 10.

April 17

Legislative Oversight and the Bureaucracy

- Walter J. Oleszek. 2010. *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*. Chapter 9.
- Huber, John D., Charles R. Shipan, and Madelaine Pfahler. 2001. "Legislatures and Statutory Control of Bureaucracy." *American Journal of Political Science* 45: 330-345.
- McCubbins, Mathew D., and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms." *American Journal of Political Science* 28: 165-179.

April 19

FINAL PAPERS DUE VIA EMAIL

April 22

Exam Review

April 24

Final Exam