

Professor Steven S. Smith
Seminar on Legislative Politics
Spring, 2012

This seminar addresses the theoretical approaches to legislative politics and several of the core debates in the political science of legislative politics of the past two decades.

The seminar focuses on the U.S. Congress. Much of the theory and methods have carried over to the study of other parliaments, but the literature on other parliaments is reserved for other seminars.

While this seminar provides a good introduction to the study of Congress, I advise students to take a follow-up seminar on advanced topics, either as a regular seminar or independent study. The literature on congressional politics is vast and a specialist on the subject should pursue additional systematic reading before setting a research program in the subfield.

Seminar Requirements

Seminar assignments are intended to prepare you to (a) identify important research problems for future research and (b) prepare you for the comprehensive exam in American politics. Your primary responsibility is to complete the reading for each seminar and be prepared to discuss the theory, methods, and findings of each study. One quarter of your grade will be based on the quality of your participation.

Two papers are required. The paper topics will be distributed separately. Each topic will be similar to a comprehensive exam question. The paper should be 10-15 doubled-spaced pages in 12-point font, excluding a reference list.

A take-home final exam will be distributed on April 12. There will be one exam question and a complete answer will take the same form as the paper assignment—10-15 doubled-spaced pages in 12-point font, excluding a reference list.

Meeting Dates

January 17, 24, 31; February 7, 14, 21, 28; March 6 (morning session), 20, 27; April 3, 17, 24 (skip April 10); May 1 (flexible)

Reading

1. Essential Background (January 17)
 - Steven S. Smith, Jason M. Roberts, and Ryan Vander Wielen, *The American Congress*, 7th edition (Cambridge), Chapters 2-8, 12
 - Barbara Sinclair, *Unorthodox Lawmaking*, 4th ed. (CQ Press), Chapters 2-6
 - Walter Oleszek, *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*, 8th edition (CQ Press), Chapter 3-8
2. Theoretical Approaches, Social Systems (January 24)
 - Matthews, Donald R. 1960. *U.S. Senators and Their World*. New York: Vintage Books, Chapter 5.
 - Huitt, Ralph K. 1961. The Outsider in the Senate. *American Political Science Review*: 566-75.
 - Fenno, Richard F. 1962. The House Appropriations Committee as a Political System. *American Political Science Review*: 310-24.
 - Polsby, Nelson. 1968. The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives. *American Political Science Review* 62:144-168.
 - Rohde, Ornstein, and Peabody. 1985. Political Change and Legislative Norms in the U.S. Senate, 1957-1974. In Glenn R. Parker (ed.), *Studies of Congress*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
3. Theoretical Approaches, Rational Choice and Spatial Models (January 31)
 - Mayhew, David R. *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (Yale, 1974; or 2nd ed., Yale, 2004)
 - Shepsle, Kenneth, and Barry R. Weingast. 1994. Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19:149-80.
 - Shepsle, Kenneth A., and Mark S. Bonchuck. 1997. *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behavior, and Institutions*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., pp. 49-59, 83-89, 299-329.
 - Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapters 1, 2.
 - Smith, et al., *The American Congress*, Appendix.
4. The Incumbency Advantage (February 7)
 - Fiorina, Morris P. *Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment*, 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989; Recommended: Morris Fiorina, "Keystone Reconsidered," in Dodd and Oppenheimer, eds., *Congress Reconsidered*, 7th ed., pp. 141-162.
 - Erikson, Robert S., and Thomas R. Palfrey. 2000. Equilibria in Campaign Spending Games: Theory and Data. *American Political Science Review* 94:595-609.
 - Cox, Gary W., and Jonathon Katz. 2002. *Elbridge Gerry's Salamander: The*

Electoral Consequences of the Reapportionment Revolution. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Jeffrey Stonecash, *Reassessing the Incumbency Effect* (Cambridge: 2008)
- Benjamin Highton, The Influence of Strategic Retirement on the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections, *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 23 (4): 431-447. Available [here](#).

5. Representation (February 14)

- Miller, Warren E., and Donald E. Stokes. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 57, no. 1 (1963): 45-56.
- Erikson, Robert S. 1978. Constituency Opinion and Congressional Behavior. *American Journal of Political Science* 22 (3): 511-35.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen and Philip Edward Jones. 2010. "Constituents' Responses to Congressional Roll- Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science*. 54 (3): 583-597.
- Fenno, Richard F. 1977. U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies. *American Political Science Review* 71 (3): 883-916.
- Weissberg, Robert 1978. Collective vs. Dyadic Representation in Congress. *American Political Science Review* 72 (2): 535-47.
- Lee, Frances E., and Brice I. Oppenheimer. *Sizing Up the Senate: The Unequal Consequences of Equal Representation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
- Frances E. Lee, "Bicameral Institutions and Geographic Politics: Allocating Federal Funds for Transportation in the House and Senate." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 29 (May 2004): 185-213.
- Bernhard, William and Brian R. Sala. 2006. "The Remaking of an American Senate: The 17th Amendment and Ideological Responsiveness." *Journal of Politics* 68: 345-357

Others:

- Evans, Diana. *Greasing the Wheels* (Cambridge 2004)
- Fenno, Richard F. *Home Style* (Little Brown, 1978; Longman 2002)
- Sulkin, Tracy. 2005. *Issue Politics in Congress*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Jones, Philip Edward. 2011. "Which Buck Stops Here? Accountability for Policy Positions and Policy Outcomes in Congress." *Journal of Politics* 73 (3): 764-782.
- Parker, David C.W. and Craig Goodman. 2009. "Making a Good Impression: Resource Allocation, Home Styles, and Washington Work." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34(4): 193-524.

6. Party Influence, Part 1 (February 21)

- Cooper, Joseph, and David W. Brady. 1981. Institutional Context and Leadership Style: The House from Cannon to Rayburn. *American Political Science Review* 75 (2):411-425.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1993. Where's the Party? *British Journal of Political Science* 23:235-66.
- Smith, Steven S. 2007. *Party Influence in Congress*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, Frances E. 2009. *Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, chapters 1-5, 8

7. Party Influence, Part 2 (February 28)

- Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aldrich, John H. and David W. Rohde. 2000. "The Consequences of Party Organization in the House: The Role of the Majority and Minority Parties in Conditional Party Government." In *Polarized Politics*. Edited by John R. Bond and Richard Fleisher. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 31-72.
- Den Hartog, Chris and Nathan W. Monroe. 2011. *Agenda Setting in the U.S. Senate: Costly Consideration and Majority Party Advantage*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Finocchiaro, Charles J., and David W. Rohde. 2008. "War for the Floor: Partisan Theory and Agenda Control in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 33:35-61
- Ostrander, Pope, and Smith, "Procedural Motions and Majority Party Power in the U.S. Senate," paper presented at the Southern Political Science Association Meetings, January, 2012

7. Party Polarization (March 6)

- Jacobson, Gary C. 2000. Party Polarization in National Politics: The Electoral Connection. In *Polarized Politics: Congress and the President in a Partisan Era*, edited by J. R. Bond and R. Fleischer. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.
- Brewer, Mark D., Mack D. Mariani, and Jeffrey M. Stonecash. 2002. Northern Democrats and Party Polarization in the U.S. House. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 27:423-444.
- Roberts, Jason M. and Steven S. Smith. 2003. "Procedural Contexts, Party Strategy, and Conditional Party Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1971-2000," *American Journal of Political Science*, 47(2): 305-317
- Nolan, McCarty, Keith Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2006. *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

- Sinclair, Barbara. 2006. *Party Wars: Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making, The Julian J. Rothbaum Distinguished Lecture Series ; v. 10*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Carson, Jamie L., Michael Crespin, Charles Finocchiaro and David Rohde. 2007. "Redistricting, Constituency Influence, and Party Polarization in Congress," *American Politics Research*, 35(6): 878-904.

8. Committee Membership and Assignments (March 20)

- Jones, Charles. 1961. Representation in Congress: The Case of the House Agriculture Committee. *American Political Science Review* 55 (June): 358-357.
- Fenno, Richard F. 1973. *Congressmen in Committees*. Boston: Little, Brown, Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. Berkeley: University of California Press, Chapters 7 and 8.
- Frisch, Scott A., and Sean Q. Kelly. 2006. *Committee Assignment Politics in the U.S. House of Representatives*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Lazarus, Jeffrey, and Nathan W. Monroe. 2007. The Speaker's Discretion: Conference Committee Appointments in the 97th through 106th Congresses. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 60, No. 4 (Dec.), pp. 593-606

9. Committee Principals and Bias (March 27)

- Krehbiel, Keith, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Barry R. Weingast. 1987. "Why Are Congressional Committees Powerful?" *American Political Science Review* 81(September): 929-945
- Hall, Richard, and Bernard Groffman. 1990. The Committee Assignment Process and the Conditional Nature of Committee Bias. *American Political Science Review* 84 (4): 1149-1166.
- Krehbiel, Keith. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991.
- Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. Berkeley: University of California Press, Chapters 1, 3, 7, 8.
- Maltzman, Forrest. 1995. Meeting Competing Demands - Committee Performance in the Postreform House. *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (3): 653-82.
- Aldrich and Rohde. 2009. Congressional Committees in a Continuing Partisan Era. In L. Dodd and B. Oppenheimer (Eds.), *Congress Reconsidered*, 9th ed. (CQ Press), 217-240

10. Theories of Procedural Development (April 3)

- Binder, Sarah A. 1997. *Minority Rights, Majority Rule: Partisanship and the*

Development of Congress. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Schickler, and Rich. 1997. Controlling the Floor: Parties as Procedural Coalitions in the House. *American Journal of Political Science* (October): 1340-1375.
- Cox, Gary W., and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1997. Toward a Theory of Legislative Rules Changes: Assessing Schickler and Rich's Evidence. *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (4): 1376-1386.
- 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.
- Binder, Sarah. 2006. Parties and Institutional Choice Revisited. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 31 (4): 413-532.
- Park, Hong Min. Unpublished.
- Smith, Steven. Unpublished. A Factional Spatial Theory of Congressional Organization.

11. Roll-Call Voting (April 17)

- Poole, Keith T., Howard Rosenthal, and Keith T. Poole. 2007. *Ideology and Congress*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, Chapters 1-4.
- Jackson, John, and John W. Kingdon. 1992. Ideology, Interest Group Scores, and Legislative Votes. *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (August):805-823.
- Wilcox and Clausen, "The Dimensionality of Roll-Call Voting Reconsidered," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (August 1991): 393-406.
- Clinton, Joshua, Simon Jackman, Douglas Rivers. 2004. "The Statistical Analysis of Roll Call Data," *The American Political Science Review*, 98(2): 355-370
- Bailey, Michael A. 2007. Comparable preference estimates across time and institutions for the Court, Congress and presidency. *American Journal of Political Science* 51:433-48
- McCarty, Nolan, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2001, "The Hunt for Party Discipline in Congress," *The American Political Science Review*, 95(3): 673-687
- Hurwitz, Mark S., Roger J. Moiles, and David W. Rohde. 2001. Distributive and Partisan Issues in Agriculture Policy in the 104th House. *American Political Science Review* 95:911-922
- Roberts, Smith, and Haptonstahl. Unpublished. Dimensionality Reconsidered.

12. The Senate and the Filibuster Debate (April 24)

- Binder, Sarah, and Steven S. Smith. 1997. *Politics or Principle: Filibustering in the Senate*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Wawro, Gregory, and Eric Schickler. 2006. *Filibuster : Obstruction and Lawmaking in the U.S. Senate, Princeton Studies in American Politics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Binder, Sarah, Anthony Madonna, and Steven S. Smith. *Going Nuclear, Senate*

- Style. *Perspectives on Politics*. Vol. 5 (4, December): 729-40
- Koger, Gregory. 2010. *Filibustering: A Political History of Obstruction in the House and Senate*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
 - Gailmard, Sean and Jeffrey A. Jenkins. 2007. "Negative Agenda Control in the Senate and House: Fingerprints of Majority Party Power," *Journal of Politics* 69:689-700.
 - Smith, Steven S. 2010. "The Senate Syndrome." The Brookings Institution, *Issues in Governance Studies* 35, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2010/06_cloture_smith/06_cloture_smith.pdf

13. The Divided Government Debate (May 1)

- Mayhew, David. 1991. *Divided We Govern: Party Control, Lawmaking, and Investigating: 1946-1990*. New Haven ed. Yale University Press.
- Binder, Sarah A. 1999. The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-96. *American Political Science Review* 93 (3):519-534.
- Howell, William, Scott Adler, Charles Cameron, and Charles Riemann. 2000. Divided Government and the Legislative Productivity of Congress, 1945-1994. *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 25 (2):285-312.
- Binder, Sarah, 2008. Taking the Measure of Congress. *Political Analysis*. 16: 213-225.
- Chiou, Fang-Yi, and Lawrence S. Rothenberg. 2008a. Comparing legislators and legislatures: The dynamics of legislative gridlock reconsidered. *Political Analysis* 16(2): 226-233.



Other essential reading

Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven: Yale University Press, chapters 1-6, 10.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, chapters 1 and 2, pp. 3-50 (all recommended). (ELMS)

Stimson, James A., Michael B. Mackuen, and Robert S. Erikson. 1995. "Dynamic Representation." *American Political Science Review* 89 (September): 543-565 (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2082973>)

Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, "Abandoning the Middle" *Perspectives on Politics*, 3 (2005: March) 33-53. (<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3688109>)

- Hall, Richard L. 1996. *Participation in Congress*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Smith, Steven S. 1989. *Call to Order: Floor Politics in the House and Senate* (Brookings)
- Sinclair, Barbara. 1989. *The Transformation of the U.S. Senate* (Hopkins)
- Dodd, Lawrence C. 1977 "Congress and the Quest for Power" in *Congress Reconsidered*, ed. Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce I. Oppenheimer. New York: Praeger, pp. 269-307.
- Swers, Michele. 2002. "The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress." Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
- Gamble, Katrina L. 2007. "Black Political Representation: An Examination of Legislative Activity Within U.S. House Committees" 32 (3): 421-447
- Mayhew, David R. 2000. *America's Congress: Actions in the Public Sphere, James Madison Through Newt Gingrich*. New Haven: Yale University Press
- Cameron, Charles, David Epstein, and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1996. "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?" *American Political Science Review* 90 (Dec): 794-812.
(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2945843>)
- Lublin, David. 1999 "Racial Redistricting and African-American Representation: A Critique of "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?" *American Political Science Review*, 93(1): 183-186
(<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2585769>)
- Lee, Frances E. 2000. "Senate Representation and Coalition Building in Distributive Politics" *American Political Science Review* 94 (March): 59-72.
- Jacobson, Gary C. 2008. *The Politics of Congressional Elections* (Longman Classics in Political Science), 7th ed. Longman
- Deering, Christopher J. and Steven Smith. 1997. *Committees in Congress*. 3rd ed. Washington DC: CQ Press
- Young, Garry and Valerie Heitshusen, 2003. "Party and the Dynamics of Congressional Committee Composition in the U.S. House, 1947-96." *British Journal of Political Science* 33(4):659-679
- Rohde, David. 1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House*. Chicago:

University of Chicago Press, 1-105.

Caro, Robert A. 2002. *Master of the Senate: The Years of Lyndon B. Johnson*. New York: Knopf

Polsby, Nelson. 2004. *How Congress Evolves: Social Bases of Institutional Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, chapter 1, pp. 7-35

Jones, Charles O. 1968. "Joseph G. Cannon and Howard W. Smith: An Essay on the Limits of Leadership in the House of Representatives." *Journal of Politics* 30 (August): 617-646

Baumgartner, Frank R., Jeffrey M. Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David C. Kimball, and Beth L. Leech. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Hall, Richard L. and Alan V. Deardorff. 2006. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* 100 (February): 69-84

Lowi, Theodore J. 1964. "American Business, Public Policy, Case-Studies, and Political Theory." *World Politics* 16 (July): 677-715

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First Half Paper Topics

Representation. Describe and evaluate the ways in which congressional representation has been conceptualized. What are the major challenges in measuring the quality of representation provided by Congress and its members?

Incumbency Advantage. For the U.S. House of Representatives, describe and evaluate the contending theories the incumbency advantage. In doing so, answer these questions. What is the evidence for the size of and trends in the incumbency advantage? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the measures of the incumbency advantage? What are the contending explanations for the trends? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the contending explanations?

Party Influence. Describe and evaluate the contending theories of party influence in Congress. In doing so, answer these questions. What are the major kinds of party influence? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the contending explanations in the debate over party influence? What are the major challenges in testing the contending theories?

Second Half Paper Topics

Committee Bias. Describe and evaluate the contending theories about bias in the policy-making process of Congress introduced through its system of standing committees. In doing so, answer these questions. What is the evidence that committees are or are not biased? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the measures used? What are the contending theoretical arguments? What are the strengths and weaknesses of those arguments?

Divided Party Control. Describe and evaluate the contending arguments about the importance of divided party control of Congress and the presidency for policy outcomes. In doing so, answer these questions. What is the evidence that party control does or does not make a difference for policy outcomes? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the measures used? What are the contending theoretical arguments? What are the strengths and weaknesses of those arguments?

Party Polarization. Describe and evaluate the contending explanations for the polarization of parties in Congress.

Final Exam Topic

Rational choice theories have come to dominate scholarly studies of Congress. Cite and critique the most important examples. In doing so, answer these questions. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these theories? Is there something about legislative politics that make it particularly appropriate to use rational choice theories? Are there features of legislative politics that have gone unaddressed because of the reliance on rational choice theories?