

Course Syllabus

Course Information

Government 4343.001
Congress and Public Policy
Spring 2013: TR 2:30-3:45
Green Hall (GR) 2.302

Contact Information

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Course Description

This course explores the history and development of both the place of Congress in the Constitutional order and the internal structures and behaviors of the legislative process. Topics include congressional-presidential relations, elections, representation, committees, parties and leadership, collective action and coalition building, and Congress' capacity to deliberate and make public policy

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the legislative process in the U.S. Congress
- Learn how parties, committees, and individuals interact to produce public policy
- Acquire an understanding of Congressional elections
- Learn the skills needed to think critically about government outside of partisan politics
- Students will appreciate how the many players in our government interact to produce varied political outcomes

Required Textbooks and Materials

R. Davidson, W. Oleszek & F. Lee, Congress and Its Members, 13th ed.

D. Mayhew, Congress: The Electoral Connection 2nd ed.

I will also post selected readings to the UTD eLearning page under **Course Content**.

The dates for specific readings are detailed below. You will find it useful to have the reading done prior to the class where it is discussed. Students who expect to read all of the material the night before an exam will most likely receive a poor grade.

Assignments and Grading

1. Two in-class exams (Feb. 21 and April 9)	20% each
2. Election Brief (March 7 th)	10%
3. Simulation (Throughout)	20%
4. Final Exam (May 7)	30%

When the final roster for the course is complete, I will post a schedule for the simulation.

Your grade in this course will be based on the above components. The dates for the exams will not be changed so do not miss them. If you miss an exam with a university accepted excuse, a make-up exam may be given if the appropriate documentation is produced. If you miss an exam without a university accepted excuse, a grade of 0 will be assigned. I will not give incompletes except under extraordinary circumstances.

Grading Policy

The grading scale for this class is as follows: A+, 97 or higher; A, 93-96; A-, 90-92; B+, 87-89; B, 83-86; B-, 80-82; C+, 77-79; C, 73-76; C-, 70-72; D+, 67-69; D, 60-66; F, below 60.

There is no extra credit for this class. Please do not ask.

Course & Instructor Policies

I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. Please do not talk on your cell phone, text message, tweet, Facebook, play video games, snap chat, pinterest, or whatever new thing you kids do that I haven't heard of yet, etc. Although I do not take attendance, you are expected to attend class regularly.

You will be held responsible for all material in the textbooks and in lectures, even if you miss a class. It is your responsibility to remain aware of when assignments are due and to be sure they are completed on time. I recommend that you plan far enough in advance when working on assignments or studying for an examination to avoid unnecessary problems.

I DO NOT TOLERATE CHEATING

Class Schedule

Below is the reading schedule for the semester. Please note DOL is your textbook, *Congress and Its Members*

Dates	Topic	Reading
Jan. 15	Intro and Syllabus	---
Jan. 17 & 22	Congress Overview	
Jan. 24 & 29	In Search of Two Congresses	DOL Chap. 1 & 2 Polsby#
Jan. 31 & Feb. 5	The Electoral Incentive	Mayhew 1-77
Feb. 7 & 12	Processes and Policies	Mayhew 81-End
Feb. 14 & 19	Parties Matter	Aldrich and Rohde#
Feb. 21	EXAM 1	---
Feb. 26 & 28	Recruitment and Candidacy	DOL Chap. 3 Jacobson#
March 5	The Electoral Game	DOL Chap. 4
March 7	Congress and History <u>Election Brief Due</u>	---
March 12 & 14	Spring Break	---
March 19 & 21	Home Styles and Hill Styles	DOL Chap. 5 Fenno #
March 26 & 28	Parties and Leaders	DOL Chap. 6

April 2 & 4	Committees	DOL Chap. 7 Hall# CRS Committees
April 9	Exam II	---
April 11 April 16 & 18	No Class, Conference Rules and Procedure	--- DOL Chap. 8 CRS House Procedure#
April 23 & 25	Decision Making in Congress	DOL Chap. 9 CRS House vs. Senate Procedure#
April 30 & May 2	Simulation	
May 7	Final Exam	---

#Under **Course Content->Posted Readings** on eLearning

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.