

The Policymaking Process

Course Syllabus

GOVT 4370 Policy Making Process
Fall 2007

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Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Restricted to participants in the University of Texas Archer Fellows program.

Course Description

This course focuses on the roles of the Congress and the President in shaping public policy. The Founders created three co-equal branches of government, but the powers and authorities of the branches overlap and are arguably vague. The goal of the course is to help us better understand these powers and authorities, the process of policymaking at the federal level, and the conflicts and cooperation that are possible. Case studies focused on the budget process and major policy issues will provide context.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

On completing this course, students will be able to:

1. describe the political environment in which Members of Congress and the President act on public policy issues,
 2. articulate how the legislative and executive branches exercise their Constitutional roles in policymaking,
 3. explain the emergent legislative-executive struggle over powers and responsibilities between the branches as highlighted in particular policy arenas,
 4. compose a paper that proposes a strategy (either from the standpoint of the legislature or the executive) to achieve a policymaking goal.
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Required Textbooks and Materials

Rivals for Power: Presidential-Congressional Relations. (RFP) Edited by James A. Thurber, PhD
3rd Edition (Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006.)

The Federalist Papers Hamilton, Jay, Madison, (any edition including online).

The Constitution (any edition, including online).

Other readings as assigned throughout the course, comprised mostly of think tank papers from sources such as the Brookings Institution and the Heritage Foundation.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

September 17 Reading:	Introduction/The Constitutional Sources of Congressional and Executive Power The Constitution <u>The Federalist Papers</u> , #10, #51 & #52
September 24 Reading:	Introduction continued: Overview of the Rivalry RFP Preface and Chap 1.
October 1 Reading:	The federal budget process explained: the process and the politics RFP Chapter 9
October 8 Reading:	Structural sources of conflict RFP Chapter 2
October 15 Reading:	Who leads whom and how? RFP Chapters 3 and 5
October 22 Readings:	The impact of electoral politics on presidential-congressional relations? RFP Chapter 4
October 29	Viewing the rivalry through “eras of Congress” RFP Chapters 6 and 7 Mid-term Essay Exam
November 5	The veto and the override RFP Chapter 8 Midterm grades given out
November 12 Readings:	The domestic politics and the diplomacy of the trade wars RFP Chapter 10
November 19 Readings:	Who makes foreign policy, and when is war actually a “war”? RFP Chapters 11 and 12
November 26 Readings:	No reading assignment—Presentations due Written assignments due
December 3 Readings:	No reading assignment—Presentations due
December 10 Readings:	No reading assignment—Presentations due Final Essay Exam

There will be several guest speakers throughout the semester speaking to issues of the policymaking process, both executive branch and legislative branch, including former committee chairmen and current staff members.

Grading Policy

- 1) the syllabus explains how grades are determined based on assignments and class participation.
- 2) students will be given a midterm grade around week 7. This need not include 50% of the work. The goal of the midterm grade is to give students a sense of how they are performing in the class, particularly with regard to class participation, and help them understand what they need to do to improve their performance.
- 3) Include on the syllabus wording along the lines of the following:

Students who complete all assigned projects SATISFACTORILY AND in a timely manner will receive a B. Students who display excellence through written work and through class participation will receive an A. Students who fail to SATISFACTORILY complete assigned projects or to attend classes regularly will receive lower than a B. The grading scale used in the course will include + and - grades, although your home institution may limit grading to simple letter grades for GPA purposes. Students are encouraged to discuss with faculty how they might display excellence in the course.

Two Short Essay Exams	30%
Policy Strategy Memo	40%
Participation	30%

We will use the University of Texas grading scale.

Course & Instructor Policies

Attendance is not optional. You are all in Washington for a very short time and this class is as much a part of that experience as is your internship.

Students are expected to attend all classes and organized Archer functions. Faculty recognize that there are times when personal matters, illness, or internship responsibilities demand that a class be missed. It is the student's responsibility to notify faculty when class will be missed and to arrange to makeup any assignments or work missed. **HOWEVER, UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL RESULT IN LOWER GRADES.**

Written assignments are due at the start of class on the day they are due. If you are late with an assignment, your work may be reduced by a full grade. Please talk with me early if you are having trouble completing an assignment.

Written Assignment

The task is to imagine yourself as an advisor to a policymaker, either a Member of Congress or an executive branch official. Your goal is to develop a policy initiative (or adapt one that exists in reality already) and design a strategy for bringing it to fulfillment, either in terms of a congressional vote or getting it through the interagency process, depending upon which branch you are serving. In short, you are being relied upon by your boss to take an idea about something and get as far as you can with it in the policy-making process. The paper should be about 12-15 pages in length. You must have your topic pre-approved by Week 5.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.