

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

Kenyon College

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Course Number: PSCI 300
Credit Hours: 0.50

Class Time: [REDACTED]
Class Location: [REDACTED]
Office Hours: [REDACTED]

Course Description & Learning Goals

The United States Congress we see and study today is the product of generations of changes made by our fellow Americans who dared to run and serve their neighbors and friends in one of the most powerful legislative institutions in modern history. To succeed in this course students must identify and understand two key aspects of that opening sentence. First, Congress is a social institution made up of people, which means that to understand the actions of the Congress we need to summarize and analyze the variable behavior of 535 people at once. This is a lofty goal to say the least and it highlights one of the most difficult challenges of social science. That is, how can we categorize the diversity of the human experience in search of generalizable answers to important questions such as, how does a bill become a law and why? Who are the people representing us in Congress and how were they successful in getting there? Who holds members of Congress accountable and how effective are they at doing so? We will tackle these questions and many others in this course. To answer them we will observe Congress and its members directly as well as tap into the research conducted by scholars of American politics.

The second aspect one must understand in this course is that Congress is a critical, and ever-evolving, institution of American government. Congress is tasked not only with legislating but also with checking the power of other national political institutions. The Congress of today is not the Congress of 1789 and changes in how the institution fulfills its core constitutional duties, how it approaches the writing of laws, and its processes for providing oversight of the federal government are each the result of ambitious members fighting for influence. Understanding the dynamic nature of Congress as an institution will help us unpack even bigger questions about American government. Is Congress still the most powerful branch of American government? Why do party leaders wield so much power over decisions? Will legislative gridlock ever end? These questions too will be answered in this course.

This course will involve digging deep into the modern Congress as it operates today as well as congresses of the past. We will explore both how the actions of the (mostly) men who served in Congress decades ago are partially responsible for the Congress we have today and how modern members of Congress continue tweaking the rules to serve their (and their constituents') goals. Given these lofty aspirations, it is strongly recommended that students have a familiarity with the American national government—and therefore have taken Liberal Democracy in America (i.e., PSCI 200D) before enrolling in this course. We will begin the course with a deep dive into Article I of the U.S. Constitution that situates Congress in the national government as well as fundamental questions about the United States as a republic. We proceed to trace the institutional development of Congress and consider intimately what a political institution is and why institutional design matters. The remainder of the course explores the legislative process, procedure, and the myriad sub-institutions that populate Congress. We conclude the course by examining Congress' role in the United States separation of powers system and the role and mechanics of congressional elections.

Three primary objectives shape the design of this course. The first is to provide students with an intimate

understanding of how Congress works today. Only through truly familiarizing oneself with the mechanics of legislative institutions can we understand the politics that consume it. When someone in your life hears you are taking a course on Congress my goal is for every student to be able to discuss some aspect of the modern Congress that really amuses or frustrates them and explain why. The second objective is to develop analytical skills by which to understand complex relationships and phenomena. Students' critical thinking skills will be tested and refined through a series of assignments meant to help students actively engage with the lecture material, assigned readings, and the perspectives of their classmates.

The final objective is to introduce the work of political scientists by concentrating on the paradigms and techniques of the discipline. Some scholars claim that the literature on the United States Congress is the most developed in all of the subfield of Americans politics. I happen to agree and, as much as possible, we will ponder what scholars have said about Congress and its trajectory in American political life. We will engage in regular class discussions where students will be asked to apply contemporary scholarship or editorial perspectives to the content covered in class and debate the ideas therein. Ideally, this course will shape students into more thoughtful citizens and consumers of political information about Congress. And, ultimately, it should help students attain a more sophisticated understanding of the politics of the United States both today and in the recent past.

Course Expectations & Policies

I expect students to come to class prepared to engage the lecture material or the relevant discussion of the day. Policies about preparedness for class and the required materials to be successful are detailed below (in this section and beyond).

Attendance: A core part of your education at Kenyon College involves rigorous and spirited discussion of theory and evidence. This principle applies to this course thoroughly. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If you arrive late, see me at the conclusion of class to ensure your presence is recorded. All excused absences issued by the College will be respected and will not count against your attendance. This course meets twice a week and therefore students will be afforded two unexcused absences without penalty to their participation grade. These absences should be reserved for extraordinary circumstances, especially the case of unexpected illness. Since The Cox Health and Counseling Center does not issue notes for illness outside of major communicable illness or injury, minor illnesses cannot be verified and therefore should be the purpose for most, if not all, unexcused absences you utilize. Under extreme circumstances, I reserve the right to issue an excused absence. However, it would be unwise to expect an excused absence outside of College-verified circumstances.

Each absence beyond your initial two free absences will result in a partial letter-grade reduction in your participation grade. For example, if you earned a B for your participation grade, but missed three classes, you would receive a B- as your final participation grade. If you missed four classes, you would receive a C+, and so on. Please note further that Kenyon College's academic policies preclude students from missing more than 25% of classes without risk of expulsion from the course (i.e., 7 classes total).

Late Submissions: All assignments listed below (with the exception of the exams) are due at the beginning of class on the due date listed in the course schedule. All assignments are to be submitted online on Moodle. Assignments will **not** be accepted via email. In the absence of extreme circumstances (with documentation), assignments turned in after their due date will be accepted but penalized based on how late the submission is.

Each class day a submission is late will be penalized part of a letter grade (with the same logic as the penalty described above for attendance). For example, assume an assignment is due on Tuesday. If a student submits their work and it is evaluated as a C+ paper, but it is submitted on Wednesday, it would earn a C. If that same assignment was turned in on Thursday at 9 PM (or even Friday, Saturday, etc. until the next class day), it would earn a C-. Breaks in the academic calendar (e.g., Thanksgiving break) do not waive penalties. Penalties will accrue as if the class were meeting. **Assignments later than two weeks will be accepted only under extreme and unpredictable circumstances.**

Grade Appeals: I understand the pressure many students are under to succeed in every single course they take. I am happy to meet with any student during office hours to discuss the appeal of any grade earned **within seven days of the grade being posted.** If a student feels a grade has been evaluated incorrectly they should come prepared with a substantive argument about why they feel they should have earned additional points. Once the appeal has been made and I render my final decision the grade I assign will be final.

Panic Policy: As the semester wears on, you may find yourself in a situation where, due to multiple pressures on your time, you may consider taking a shortcut in order to turn in an assignment by the deadline (e.g., utilizing ChatGPT, reusing work from another class, etc.). If this is the case, the thing to do is to drop everything and contact me via email immediately regarding your situation. I can do my best to help relieve some of the pressure related to my class in a way that is equitable for the other students in the class as well. Always remember, to struggle is human, and I grade the assignments, not the person. However, I cannot do anything for you once you commit an act (knowingly or negligently) of academic dishonesty. So, again, if you find yourself in a panic, please get in touch with me—we will work through it together with no judgement.

Written Work: All written assignments should be turned in online via the course's Moodle webpage. All submitted work should be double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font. Page margins should be 1 inch on all sides. I will not accept work via email except under unexpected circumstances. Students should retain their own copy of all submitted work for at least one year following the completion of this course.

Email & Appointments: The best way to contact me during the semester is via email (mcgee1@kenyon.edu). I cannot promise to respond to any messages sent via Moodle. I respond to emails during regular business hours (i.e., Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) and strive to respond to all emails within 24 hours. I cannot promise replies at night or on weekends. If you would prefer to speak in person, and my regularly scheduled office hours conflict with your schedule, please let me know and we can set up an appointment that fits both of our schedules.

Personal Pronoun Preference: I will gladly honor any request to address students by a different name than what is listed on the official class roster. Please inform me of any preferred names, nicknames, or gender pronouns as early as possible so I can adopt them for the entirety of the semester and onward. For your reference, my pronouns are he/him/his. If there are further accommodations that will make you feel more comfortable in class, please come to office hours so we can discuss them.

Course Materials:

This course has one required text. It is available at the Kenyon Bookstore or online. I am agnostic about the format students choose to utilize when reading the text (i.e., eBook format is acceptable if available). I am sensitive to the realities of scholarly and textbook costs and because of this I have created PDF scans of all relevant books and articles to distribute to all students for free via Moodle at least one week prior to the class date listed on the course schedule.

Required:

- Freeman, Joanne B. 2018. *The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. ISBN: 9780374154776

This is an upper-level course in political science. As noted above, some level of familiarity with American national government is assumed for those enrolled. If you seek additional reference information about Congress or the legislative process, you might consider purchasing or seeking from the library the following texts.

Reference:

- Theriault, Sean M. and Mickey Edwards. 2019. *Congress: The First Branch*. First Edition. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 019981130X
- Sinclair, Barbara. 2016. *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress*. Fifth Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN: 9781506322834.

Grading:

Discussion Participation	10%
Institutions Paper	20%
Response Papers	15%
Final Term Paper	20%
Term Paper Presentation	5%
Midterm	15%
Final Exam	15%

All items listed above are detailed below. I do not round final grades as a matter of principle, but may consider doing so if a student demonstrates particular commitment or gumption throughout the semester. I will utilize the following cutoffs when evaluating grades:

A	93%
A-	90%
B+	88%
B	83%
B-	80%
C+	78%
C	73%
C-	70%
D+	68%
D	64%
D-	60%
F	≤ 59%

Description of Assignments

Discussion Participation: (10%)

This course is organized as a hybrid between lecture and seminar formats. Congress is a complex and sometimes complicated political institution. As such, some topics are best delivered via lecture. Whenever possible, class will include robust discussion of the foundational ideas of American government, as well as cutting-edge research that advances our contemporary understanding of Congress in the American political system. Students are expected to engage with discussions in class having come with the assigned materials already read. Students should expect to spend four to six hours maximum of reading per week. Please come to see me if you are taking longer to complete the readings, and/or if you are having a tough time understanding them.

To get full credit for participation in this class students will ask questions when necessary during lectures and contribute meaningful thoughts, arguments, and questions during the discussions of assigned readings. Students are also expected to attend one meeting of the Mount Vernon City Council (as scheduled on the syllabus). Moreover, fulfilling this participation requirement is not merely a matter of raising your hand every class, but demonstrating that when you do participate it is useful in clarifying a concept in lecture or advancing an argument in the discussion. The greatest benefit you can get from this class is not simply increased knowledge about American politics, but also hearing the perspectives of your peers and wrestling with arguments you might not agree with immediately.

An ideal classroom setting is one in which all members of the class feel comfortable speaking. To this end, I recognize that some students feel really comfortable speaking (a lot); these students may need to work on listening more, and potentially being more concise in their comments. For students who feel less comfortable speaking, this will require them to talk more. Discussions where everyone participates are far richer and beneficial to everyone in the class. Regardless of the amount one speaks, be considerate in the language used. Politics can lead to high temperature discussions; treat your peers how you would want to be treated and extend generosity to your peers who may choose their words hastily. I will work to create a safe and inclusive environment to the best of my ability, but ultimately respect for one another will result in the best environment for all.

Institutions Paper: (20%)

This course emphasizes the theoretical lens of Congress as a political institution. We will discuss this

perspective in detail in our third class meeting. A significant portion of the course involves examining sub-institutions within Congress (e.g., political parties, committees, caucuses, district offices, internal think tanks) and critical external influences (e.g., interest groups, lobbyists, public opinion, external think tanks). Students will write an 8-10 page paper in which they will argue which of these sub-institutions or external influences is most effective or important for helping members meet their core goals as members (to be defined in class at length).

This assignment is composed of three component parts. First, students will select three goals to address and provide context for why members are motivated to accomplish these goals in a contemporary political context. Second, they will discuss what it means for Congress to be a political institution and why sub-institutions or external actors are even necessary for Congress to function effectively. Third, they will advance well-researched and supported arguments as to which sub-institution most effectively allows members to accomplish each goal they selected. I greatly encourage students to meet with me in office hours to discuss their approach to the paper throughout the semester.

Response Papers: (15%)

As noted above, in the “Discussion Participation” section of the syllabus, discussion is a core aspect of this course. To ensure students are regularly coming to class prepared, they will write a total of three short response papers due at intervals throughout the semester (see course schedule at the end of this document). The response paper should concisely summarize each article and articulate your position on the documents you read. When writing your draft keep in mind that the main goals of this assignment are to confirm you understood what you read and to evaluate your thoughts on the topic as they relate to our lectures in class, current events, or your personal experiences. You may select any week with assigned readings to react to, but note that the deadlines divide the course into thirds and each response paper must come from the previous set of readings. For example, for the second paper, the only valid topics are those after the first response paper’s deadline but before the second paper’s deadline. Note further that students must react to all the assigned materials for the week they select to respond to (i.e., if the week you pick has three readings, you must summarize and react to each of them in your paper).

Students are encouraged to meet with me in office hours if they are struggling to understand the arguments being made or need help clarifying their thoughts. I will not summarize the article(s) for you, but I am happy to serve as a sounding board for your thoughts and nudge you in the right direction to stimulate an interesting discussion in class (and for your response paper). Each paper should be 2-3 pages (excluding any title page or bibliography) and should include a bibliography for any works cited.

Final Term Paper: (20%)

Students will write a final term paper examining a particular aspect of Congress that you find to be interesting. However, you must clear your project with me before you start substantial research on it. This is not optional. Failure to consult with me in the development of your project will mean more work for you toward the end of the semester (getting your paper in an acceptable form and on an acceptable topic) or a lower paper grade. There are no real constraints on exactly what you analyze, as long as it is relevant to the study of Congress or congressional behavior.

The final paper must be a minimum of 10 pages (excluding any title page or bibliography) and should include a bibliography containing no fewer than 10 scholarly sources. See the section above for expectations of the paper in general as well as the handout posted on Moodle. The expectations for the paper will be further addressed and explained in class.

Term Paper Presentation: (5%)

Each student will prepare and present a 10-12 minute presentation detailing their term paper. The presentation should cover your research question and motivation, a summary of your major findings, and close with a reflection on what you learned about your given topic and how it has shaped your perspective of the U.S. Congress. When developing your presentation, first and foremost, you should make sure to clearly state your research question. Think about both your paper and presentation such that you can select any paragraph in your paper or slide in your presentation and say “yes, this element contributes to answering my research question directly OR contributes critical background or theoretical information necessary for answering it.” I am looking for a cohesive project where all aspects work together.

Specifically for the presentations I will be looking to see that you state your research question, provide background/motivation for the topic, discuss the literature/theories you found and utilized, present your findings with an eye toward your research question, and bring your findings to bear on how you see Congress today given this project. I may ask a question or two afterward or maybe someone in class will (time allowing). A portion of your grade for your presentation will be derived from attending class on your peers' presentation days.

Midterm Exam: (15%)

The midterm exam will be made up of two sections. The first section is composed of multiple choice questions. The second section requires students to respond to essay prompts. The essay section will contain a variety of different prompts based on the content covered in the class and students will select a subset of them to respond to. The essay prompts may ask students to answer a question, define terms, justify a position, or any combination thereof. The exam will be closed-note and must be completed independently. The exams in this course are not cumulative, but building knowledge about Congress throughout the course will certainly aid students in performing better as the course proceeds.

Short of extraordinary circumstances, you will not be allowed to make up exams in this course. If you have planned circumstances that you believe qualify as extraordinary (e.g., a non-flexible academic or university-sanctioned commitment), you must contact me regarding these circumstances *at least two weeks in advance* of the exam in question. Otherwise, students will only be allowed to make up an exam in the event of extreme and unpredictable circumstances (e.g., a hospitalization or a sudden death in the family) and then only if documentation is provided will a make up exam be scheduled.

Final Exam: (15%)

The final exam will mirror the midterm exam in format as well as time allocated for completion. Note that students must take the final exam during the final exam period assigned to this course (see the course schedule at the end of this document). Note further that the final exam is **not** cumulative. The make-up policy for the final exam is identical to the policy for the midterm listed above.

College Statements and Policies

Academic Integrity:

At Kenyon College we expect all students, at all times, to submit work that represents our highest standards of academic integrity. It is the responsibility of each student to learn and practice the proper ways of documenting and acknowledging those whose ideas and words they have drawn upon (see Academic Honesty and Questions of Plagiarism in the Course Catalog). Ignorance and carelessness are not excuses for academic dishonesty.

I expect everyone to conduct themselves with integrity and honesty in this class. All of the work you do in this class must be your own original work. Please don't cheat. Don't plagiarize. Don't take short cuts.

All of the work that you submit in this course must have been *written for this course and not another, and must originate with you in form and content* with all sources fully and specifically cited.

If you commit an act of academic dishonesty, I am bound to follow the procedures outlined in the Kenyon College Faculty Handbook. The Handbook describes what constitutes academic honesty and penalties for violation. If you have a question about what is considered plagiarism or how to cite sources properly, come talk to me or visit the Writing Center.

Accessibility Accommodations:

Kenyon College values diversity and recognizes disability as an aspect of diversity. Our shared goal is to create learning environments that are accessible, equitable, and inclusive. If you anticipate barriers related to the format, requirements, or assessments of this course, you are encouraged first to contact the office of Student Accessibility and Support Services (SASS) by emailing sass@kenyon.edu, then to meet with the instructor to discuss accommodation options or adaptations.

Title IX:

As a faculty member, I am deeply invested in the well-being of each student I teach. I am here to assist you with your work in this course. If you come to me with non-course-related concerns, I will do my best to help. It is important for you to know that all faculty members are mandated reporters of any incidents of harassment, discrimination, and intimate partner violence and stalking. Meaning, I must report any such discussion to the Civil Rights/Title IX coordinator. I cannot keep information involving sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, or any other form of harassment or discrimination based on a protected characteristic, confidential. The Health and Counseling Center, the College chaplains, and the staff at New Directions Domestic Abuse Shelter & Rape Crisis Center are confidential resources.

Land Acknowledgement Statement:

Kenyon College acknowledges that the lands on which we live, work, celebrate, and heal are the ancestral homelands of the Miami, Lenape, Wyandotte, and Shawnee peoples, among others. The disputed Treaty of Greenville (1795) and the forced removal of Indigenous peoples from this region allowed for the founding of the College in the early 1800s. As a community, we are committed to confronting this dark past while also embracing through education and outreach the many Indigenous communities that continue to thrive in Ohio.

Copyright of Course Materials:

Course materials created by the faculty instructor such as slide presentations, handouts, assignments, outlines, quizzes, tests, and classroom recordings are protected by copyright law. You may share these materials with other students enrolled in the course. You may not reproduce, distribute, or display course materials for anyone outside of the class without the faculty member's explicit, written consent. Students are not permitted to record class sessions without the permission of the instructor.

Course Outline:

The table below shows the course outline, including reading assignments, assignment deadlines, and the dates for all exams. Everything is required unless otherwise noted. All non-book readings will be available on Moodle. You should do each day's readings before that day's class.

Date	Topic	Readings Due/Notes
Th 8/24	<i>Course Introduction</i>	- Syllabus
Tu 8/29	<i>The Role and Duties of Congress in the Republic</i>	- Article I of the U.S. Constitution - Federalist No. 39 - Winters, Jeffrey A. and Benjamin I. Page. 2009. "Oligarchy in the United States?" <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> . 7(4): 731-751.
Th 8/31	<i>Congress as a Political Institution and the Politics of Institutional Design</i>	- March, James G. and Johan P. Olsen. 2008. "Elaborating the 'New Institutionalism.'" in <i>The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions</i> Eds. Binder, Rhodes, and Rockman. Oxford University Press. - Levinson, Sanford. 2012. <i>Framed: America's 51 Constitutions and the Crisis of Governance</i> . Oxford University Press. Ch 6
Tu 9/5	<i>The Cultural and Institutional Development of Congress</i>	- Freeman, Introduction (p. 3-12 ONLY), Ch 1, Ch 2
Th 9/7	<i>The Cultural and Institutional Development of Congress</i>	- IN CLASS: "Four Hours in the Capitol" Documentary
Tu 9/12	<i>Congress as a Mirror for Societal Strife</i>	- Freeman Ch 4 - French, David. 2020. "The Growing Danger of Political Violence Threatens to Destabilize America." <i>TIME Magazine</i> .
Th 9/14	<i>Effective Representation from the Public's Perspective</i>	- Federalist Papers No. 52, 55 - Lewis, Verlan and Hyrum Lewis. 2023. <i>The Myth of Left and Right: How the Political Spectrum Misleads and Harms America</i> . Oxford University Press. Introduction, Ch 1 - Gershon, Sarah Allen et al. 2019. "Intersectional linked fate and political representation." <i>Politics, Groups, and Identities</i> . 7(3), 642-653.
Tu 9/19	<i>Being an Effective Representative in Congress</i>	- Fenno, Richard F. 1977. "U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration." <i>The American Political Science Review</i> 71(3): 883-917. p. 883-890 ONLY - Grimmer, Justin. 2013. "Appropriators not Position Takers: The Distorting Effects of Electoral Incentives on Congressional Representation." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> . 57(3): 624-642. 624-632 ONLY . - Cassella, Chris, E.J. Fagan, and Sean M. Theriault. 2023. "Partisan Asymmetries in Earmark Representation." <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> .

Date	Topic	Readings Due/Notes
Th 9/21	<i>The Textbook Legislative Process</i>	- Response Paper #1 Due
Tu 9/26	<i>The Textbook Legislative Process</i>	
Th 9/28	<i>Party Polarization in Congress</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theriault, Sean M. 2008. <i>Party Polarization in Congress</i>. Cambridge University Press. Ch 1, Ch 2 (up to p. 35 ONLY) - Lee, Frances E. 2009. <i>Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles, and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate</i>. University of Chicago Press. Ch 1
Tu 10/3	<i>The Modern Legislative Process</i>	
Th 10/5	<i>October Break</i>	- NO CLASS
Tu 10/10	<i>Procedural Tools and Strategy in the Modern Legislative Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Casas, Andreu, Matthew J. Denny, and John Wilkerson. 2019. "More Effective Than We Thought: Accounting for Legislative Hitchhikers Reveals a More Inclusive and Productive Lawmaking Process." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> - Wawro, Gregory J. and Eric Schickler. 2006. <i>Filibuster: Obstruction and Lawmaking in the U.S. Senate</i>. Princeton University Press. Ch 1 (until p. 18 ONLY)
Th 10/12	<i>Party Leadership in Congress</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curry, James. M. 2015. <i>Legislating in the Dark: Information and Power in the House of Representatives</i>. University of Chicago Press. Ch 1, 2 - Bloch Rubin, Ruth. 2017. <i>Building the Bloc: Intra-party Organization in the US Congress</i>. Cambridge University Press. Ch 1
Tu 10/17	<i>Midterm Exam</i>	
Th 10/19	<i>The Structure of Congressional Committees Today</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burgat, Casey and Charles Hunt. 2020. "Chapter 7, How Committee Staffers Clear the Runway for Legislative Action in Congress" in <i>Congress Overwhelmed: The Decline in Congressional Capacity and Prospects for Reform</i> Eds. LaPira, Drutman, and Kosar. University of Chicago Press. - Baumgartner, Frank R., Bryan D. Jones, and Michael C. MacLeod. 2000. "The Evolution of Legislative Jurisdictions." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 62(2): 321-349. p. 321-339 ONLY

Date	Topic	Readings Due/Notes
Tu 10/24	<i>Information Flows in Congress</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lewallen, Jonathan, Sean M. Theriault, and Bryan D. Jones. 2016. "Congressional dysfunction: An information processing perspective" <i>Regulation & Governance</i> 10: 179-190. - Fagan, E.J. and Zachary A. McGee. 2020. "Problem Solving and the Demand for Expert Information in Congress." <i>Legislative Studies Quarterly</i> 47(1): 53-77. - Peay, Periloux C. and Alexander Leasure. 2023. "Information Infrastructures for Black-Interest Advocacy in Congress." <i>Congress & the Presidency</i> 50(2): 220-248.
Th 10/26	<i>Congressional Committees as Mechanisms of Oversight</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lowande, Kenneth. 2018. "Who Polices the Administrative State?" <i>American Political Science Review</i> 112(4): 874-890. p. 874-884 ONLY - Mettler, Suzanne and Claire Leavitt. 2019. "Chapter 10, Public Policy and Political Dysfunction: The Polycscape, Policy Maintenance, and Oversight." in <i>Can America Govern Itself?</i> Eds. Lee and McCarty. Cambridge University Press. - Wallace-Wells, Benjamin. 2022. "Liz Cheney's Kamikaze Campaign." <i>The New Yorker</i> - Bouie, Jamelle. 2023. "The Arrogance of Samuel Alito." <i>The New York Times</i>, Opinion Section. - Letter from Chief Justice Roberts to Senator Durbin, 2023. <p>- Response Paper #2 Due</p>
Tu 10/31	<i>Congress in the Federal System and the Variance of State and Local Legislatures</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooper, Christopher A. and Heather Rimes. 2023. "Towards a Measure of Local Legislative Professionalism" <i>Urban Affairs Review</i>. - Debrief from Mount Vernon City Council Meeting
Th 11/2	<i>Being a Member of Congress...Until the Grave?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brant, Hannah K. and L. Marvin Overby. 2021. "Congressional Career Decisions in the 2018 Congressional Midterm Elections." <i>Congress & the Presidency</i> 48(1): 8-24. - Lerer, Lisa and Reid J. Epstein. 2023. "Reluctant to Retire, Leaders Raise a Tough Question: How Old Is Too Old?" <i>The New York Times</i>. - Chotiner, Isaac. 2023. "Is it Sexist to Want Dianne Feinstein to Retire?" <i>The New Yorker</i>.
Tu 11/7	<i>The Image of a Contemporary Member of Congress</i>	

Date	Topic	Readings Due/Notes
Th 11/9	<i>Congressional Elections and Party Messaging</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lee, Frances E. 2016. <i>Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign</i>. University of Chicago Press. Ch 3 - Clarke, Andrew J. 2020. "Party Sub-Brands and American Party Factions" <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 64(3): 452-470.
Tu 11/14	<i>Congressional Campaigns and Money in Politics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canes-Wrone, Brandice and Nathan Gibson. 2019. "Chapter 4, Developments in Congressional Responsiveness to Donor Opinion." in <i>Can America Govern Itself?</i> Eds. Lee and McCarty. Cambridge University Press. - Martin, Gregory J. and Zachary Peskowitz. 2018. "Agency Problems in Political Campaigns: Media Buying and Consulting." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 112(2): 231-248. <p>- Institutions Paper Due</p>
Th 11/16	<i>Where is the Line Between Influence and Corruption?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - McGee, Zachary A. and Philip R. Moniz. 2022. "Gift Travel in the U.S. House of Representatives." <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> 75(3): 706-719. - McKay, Amy Melissa. 2020. "Buying Amendments? Lobbyists' Campaign Contributions and Microlegislation in the Creation of the Affordable Care Act." <i>Legislative Studies Quarterly</i> 45(2): 327-360. - Holyoke, Thomas T., 2022. "Strategic Lobbying and the Pressure to Compromise Member Interests" <i>Political Research Quarterly</i> 75: 1255 – 1270.
Tu 11/21	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	NO CLASS
Th 11/23	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>	NO CLASS
Tu 11/28	<i>Prospects for Political Reform in a Polarized Political System</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shaw, Katherine. 2018. "Chapter 6, Reorienting Disclosure Debates in a Post-Citizens United World" in <i>Democracy by the People: Reforming Campaign Finance in America</i>. Eds. Mazo and Kuhner. Cambridge University Press. - Batchis, Wayne. 2022. <i>Throwing the Party: How the Supreme Court Puts Political Party Organizations Ahead of Voters</i>. Cambridge University Press. Ch 13.
Th 11/30	<i>What Does the Future Hold for Congress?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gandhi, Jennifer, Ben Noble, and Milan Svulik. 2020. "Legislatures and Legislative Politics Without Democracy." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 53(9): 1359-1379. <p>- Response Paper #3 Due</p>

Date	Topic	Readings Due/Notes
Tu 12/5	<i>Paper Presentations</i>	
Th 12/7	<i>Paper Presentations</i>	- FINAL CLASS DAY
Tu 12/12	<i>Final Exam</i>	- The final exam will be held in our regular classroom at 6:30 pm and will last for 90 minutes.
Th 12/14	<i>Term Paper Due</i>	- Must be submitted on Moodle by 4:00 pm.
		<p><i>Note: This syllabus is subject to change at any time without written notice. Changes will likely be announced in class and via Moodle, but it is your responsibility to verify that you always have the most current version of the syllabus for this course.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Version: 08-23-23</i></p>