Government 370L – Congress & the Presidency

Unique #: 38853
Meeting Time: MWF 9 AM – 9:50 AM
Meeting Place: Mezes B0.306

Instructor: Patrick T. Hickey
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Mezes 3.220 (232-7231)
Office Hours: MWF 10 – 11 AM (or by appt.)

Course Objectives

This course is intended to give you an understanding of why members of Congress and the president behave and interact as they do. The Founders designed these institutions with clear goals and functions in mind. The individuals who fill the institutional roles of "president" and "member of Congress" serve these goals and perform these functions. We often hear complaints about the job performance of the president and members of Congress. A major goal of this course is to enable you to evaluate these criticisms in an informed and objective manner.

Course Expectations

I employ an interactive teaching style in the classroom and I expect you to be an active participant in this course. Please read all weekly assignments by the first class day of the week. You cannot be an active participant in the class if you are not in attendance. If you are absent more than three times a semester, your participation grade will suffer and it will be very difficult for you to receive an "A" in this course. I have a "zero tolerance" policy for academic dishonesty (i.e. plagiarism and cheating).

Special Needs

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. If they certify your needs, I will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

Grades

15% Midterm 1 (short answer exam) – Friday, February 17
15% Midterm 2 (short answer exam) – Friday, March 23
25% Midterm 3 (short answer exam) – Saturday, May 12
5% First Paper – Monday, March 5
30% Final Paper – Friday, May 4
10% Class Participation and Attendance – every class! I reserve the right to take attendance, to give pop quizzes, and to assign homework projects. I do not accept excuses for absences, unless you are absent for a religious observance or other university-approved reason. If you will be absent for one of these reasons, please notify me two weeks in advance and you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. I will offer extra credit opportunities to allow you to make up for up to 3 absences.

Texts

- Davidson, Roger H., Walter J. Oleszek And Frances Lee. 2011. *Congress and Its Members*, 13th edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- Pfiffner, James. 2010. *The Modern Presidency*, 6th edition. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Mayhew, David R. 2005. *Divided We Govern: Party Control, Lawmaking and Investigations*. 2nd edition. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Online Readings (in lieu of Course Packet)

Course Outline and Readings

Week 1 – Constitutional Foundations (January 18 and 20)

- The Constitution of the United States, Preamble, Articles 1 and 2, Amendments
- The Federalists 10, 47-51, 62, and 63

Week 2 – Constitutional Foundations and The Current Context (January 23, 25 and 27)

- Mayhew, Chapter 1
- Pfiffner, Chapter 1
- Davidson, Oleszek & Lee, p. 15 - 27
- Ota, Alan K. "Voters Put GOP in Control, but on a Short Leash." *CQ Roll Call.*
- Friel, Brian. "Narrowly Divided Senate Will Complicate Agenda for Weakened Majority." *CQ Roll Call.*
- Obama current events article

Week 3 – How Has Congress Evolved? (January 30, February 1 and 3)

- Davidson, Oleszek & Lee, p. 28 – 42 & Chapter 6
- Sinclair, Barbara. 2000. Chapters 2 and 3 from *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Legislative Processes in the U.S. Congress*.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1989. "The Changing Textbook Congress"

Week 4 – How Has the Presidency Evolved? (February 6, 8 and 10)

- Tulis, Jeffrey. 2002. "The Two Constitutional Presidencies" in *The Presidency and the Political System*.
- Hickey "The Legislator-in-Chief"
- Pfiffner, Chapter 7

Week 5 – Politicians' Motivations (February 13, 15 and 17)

- Davidson, Oleszek & Lee, Chapters 1, 4 & 5
- Mayhew, David R. 1974. "The Electoral Connection and the Congress"
- Fenno, Richard F., Jr. 1999. Chapter 7, "U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration"

Midterm 1 – Friday, February 17

Week 6 – How The American People Evaluate Politicians (February 20, 22 and 24)

- Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. Chapter 10, "Citizens' Control of Government" in *The Logic of Congressional Action*.
- Chapters 1 & 5 in Buchanan, Bruce B. 1987. *The Citizen's Presidency*.
- Popkin, Samuel L. 1991. Excerpts from *The Reasoning Voter*.
- Greenstein, Fred I. 2009. Chapters 1 and 15 in *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Barack Obama*.

Week 7 – Foreign Policy, National Security and Presidential Doctrines (February 27 and 29, March 2)

- Falk, Richard. July 15, 2002. "The New Bush Doctrine." *The Nation*.
- Obama Rolling Stone Article
- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapter 15
- Pfiffner, Chapter 6

Week 8 – In-Class Research Paper Discussion (March 5)

First Paper Due – Monday, March 5

COURSE PROJECT DAYS – March 7 and 9

SPRING BREAK – March 12, 14 and 16

Week 9 – Domestic & Economic Policy (March 19, 21 and 23)

- Davidson and Oleszek, Chapters 10 & 14
- Pfiffner, Chapter 5

Exam 2 - Friday, March 23

Week 10 – Policymaking Part 1 - Introduction to Rational Choice, The Role of Political Parties (March 26, 28 and 30)

- Mayhew, Chapter 2
- Stewart, Charles III. 2001. Chapter 1, "An (Unusual) Introduction to the Study of Congress" in *Analyzing Congress*.
- Aldrich, John R. 1995. Excerpts from *Why Parties?: The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*.

Week 11 – Policymaking Part 2 (April 2, 4 and 6)

- Mayhew, Chapters 3 & 4
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. Chapter 1 in *Pivotal Politics: A Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*.
- Cameron, Charles. 2000. Chapters 1 & 2 in *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*.

Week 12 - Policymaking Part 3 (April 9, 11 and 13)

- Mayhew Chapter xx
- Cameron, Charles. 2000. Chapters 3 and 4 in *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*.
- Howell, William. 2003. Chapters 1 and 6 in *Power Without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action*.

Weeks 13 - Policymaking Part 4 (April 16, 18 and 20)

- Mayhew, Chapter 5

Week 14 – Policymaking Part 5 (April 23, 25 and 27)

- Mayhew, Chapter 6

Week 15 – Course Conclusion (April 30, May 2 and 4)

- Mayhew, Chapter 7

Final Paper due Friday, May 4

Exam 3 – Saturday, May 12 from 9 AM to 12 noon. Location TBA.