**POLS 315: The Legislative Process**

**DePauw University – Fall 2011**

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Office: Asbury 103

Office Hours: Mon 9-11, Wed 2:15-3:45, and by appointment

Course Overview:

While some people might be entirely uninterested/disgusted/turned off/ect. with Congress after the debt ceiling crisis/impasse this summer (indeed, Congress has an approval rating of only 13% (<http://www.gallup.com/poll/149009/Congressional-Job-Approval-Ties-Historic-Low.aspx>) you and I clearly know that this is an incredibly exciting time to study Congress!

The purpose of this course is to provide you with depth of knowledge and insights into why the Congress and its related institutions function (or dysfunction) in the ways that it has historically, and in the ways we have recently seen. To this end we will focus a great deal of time on studying the pressures individual members of Congress face in their decision-making (especially the influence of the electoral connection). We will discuss the role of leadership in the House at length, and ask if and how individual leaders matter to the functioning of the House. We will take an American Political Development (APD) approach to analyzing the changes of congressional institutions over time, paying particular attention to the influence of individual representatives. Your knowledge of constituent and interest group influences, and leadership duties will be applied to a two-week simulation of the current Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. The final third of the semester will be focused exclusively on the legislative process and how it has changed over time. Your experience will culminate in final project whereby you will track the path of a recent bill through Congress, applying the lessons you have learned about representation, leadership, and policy making.

Courses Requirements:

* **Readings**: You are expected to have read and digested all of the readings for the week prior to coming to class. On occasion an article relevant to the topic we are covering will be published and I will assign it on short notice. In that case I will email you an announcement and post the article on the Moodle page.

There are 4 **required** texts:

* Roger H. Davidson, Walter J. Oleszek, and Francis E. Lee. 2012. *Congress and Its Members* 13th Edition. CQ Press. ISB: 978-1608716425
* David Mayhew. 2004. *Congress: The Electoral Connection* 2nd Edition. Yale University Press. ISBN: 978-0300105872
* Barbara Sinclair. 2012. *Unorthodox Lawmaking* 4th Edition. CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1608712366.
* Randall Strahan. 2007. *Leading Representatives: The Agency of Leaders in the Politics of the U.S. House.* The Johns Hopkins University Press. ISBN: 978-0801886911

**\*\*All other readings can be found on Moodle, unless otherwise noted.**

**\*\* In addition, it is expected that you follow current events on a daily basis.**

* **Grading**:

Participation 10%

Current Events Presentation 5%

Resource Brief 5%

Leadership Questions 3%

Leadership Essay 10%

Total Simulation 35%

 Total Policy Paper 32%

* **Participation**: ***Simply showing up to class does not constitute participation*.** Your participation grade will be largely be evaluated based on your *ability to draw upon insights from the readings*, the *depth of the thoughtfulness* of your questions/comments, and your *level of activity* in class discussions.
* **Attendance:** I will take attendance every class and I expect you to be present. You are allowed two absences without penalty. Any absence beyond the first will result in a 1-point deduction from your final overall average. Students who are absent on the days of presentations or the simulation will be penalized.
* **Current Events (CE):** For most Wednesdays of the semester a team of 2 students will present a 5-7 minute update on Congress-related current events. Partners will share the grade and are encouraged to be creative in their presentation of the information.
* **Resource Brief**: Each student is responsible for putting together a 4-point resource brief (no more than 2 full pages, single-spaced 12-point font, 1” margins all around, page numbers on bottom right corner) that demonstrates they have explored various news and Congress-related sites. Your brief should present 4 new or interesting resources (e.g. multimedia, interactive, data collections, etc.) that will aid you in your ongoing research projects this semester. No more than two resources may be from the same website. Each resource should be addressed in approx. 1 paragraph that details what it information it provides and how this is will can be applied to the class this semester. Your document must be uploaded to the class Moodle site by \***noon, Monday Sept. 12**. and will be accessible to your classmates to help them in their research.
* **Leadership in the House:**
	+ Dr. Randall Strahan will be joining us by Skype to discuss his book, Leading Representatives, and issues of leadership in the House. You are responsible for uploading **TWO thoughtful discussion questions** about this subject to Moodle by **noon on October 10**. Each question will be graded on a scale of 0-3; your final score will be an average of the grades.
	+ **Essay: Application of Leadership Theories to Speaker Boehner’s Tenure**. In an 3-4 page essay (double-spaced 12-point font, 1” margins all around, page numbers on bottom right corner) explain which of the different leadership theories best explains recent leadership in the House under Speaker John Boehner. To build the case in support of your argument you may choose to focus on the Speaker’s leadership in regards to a particular event/policy or his more general pattern of leadership. Evidence for your argument should be drawn from **at least six** sources. \***Due in class Wed. October 12**.
* **Simulation**
	+ **Short Paper: Role Background (7%)** - You will submit a (~4 page, double-spaced 12-point font, 1” margins all around, page numbers on bottom right corner) background paper on your character/role in the simulation. The first half of the paper should analyze his/her personal and professional biography, including information about their party affiliation and ideology, the length of their tenure, their leadership/committee positions within Congress and on the “supercommittee,” caucus participation, any significant legislation they have sponsored, etc. Consider how these factors will influence their decision making on the supercommittee. The second half of the paper should apply what you have learned about the importance of member’s constituencies to understanding your character’s legislative experience. It should include an **analysis** of the member’s district/state including demographics (and any recent or impending changes), partisan makeup and ideology, whether they represent a “safe” seat, whether they are up for reelection in 2012 and (and if they face a formidable challenge at this point). Keeping in mind that members may be beholden to groups beyond the voters in their geographic constituency, address who the majors contributors are to their campaigns and the interest groups they represent. (Remember to include citations).
	+ **Short Paper: Policy Position (7%) –** You will submit a (~5 page, double-spaced 12-point font, 1” margins all around, page numbers on bottom right corner) paper summarizing your character’s policy positions on debt ceiling negotiations this summer. At least half the paper should be dedicated to ***analyzing*** their expected policy positions on the super committee negotiations in light of these previously held positions, constituent preferences, and recent developments.  Your paper should conclude with a separate section, entitled “negotiating strategy,” explicitly laying out what issues you are willing to compromise on (and what that would look like) and which you are not. (Remember to include citations).
	+ **Formal Presentations (5%)** – Each student will deliver a 5-minute prepared statement to the committee detailing their position(s) on the policies and what they want the outcome policy to look like. Members of the committee will present their positions on Day 1 of the simulation; leaders will present their positions on Day 2. While you may have 1 sheet of paper with notes, you are expected to have rehearsed your presentations and will penalized for reading your presentation. You may use props and images (although you should NOT deliver a full power-power presentation).
	+ **Participation in Negotiations (10%)** – Negotiating will begin at the end of class on day 2 and take place the entire class on day 3. Depending on your role, you are expected to put forth a plan (you should seek the support of like minded committee members), voice objections to plans, vote, etc. \*\***You must stay in character and will be graded on how well you maintain your position – even in emails!\*\*** Your grade will be based upon my subjective evaluation of your negotiating in front of me as well as a log that you will record on moodle. In this log you should discuss your participation in negotiations including how you voted (and why), what policies you pushed/killed for adoption (and why), copies of any emails you send to other members of the committee lobbying them on behalf of your view etc. The log will close at **Noon Wed Nov 2**.
	+ **Press Release (6%)** – Your character will upload a press release (no more than 500 words) to his/her constituents (via Moodle) evaluating the outcome of the committee’s negotiations, including why they voted for or against the bill that passed (and the position on the various proposals that were put forth in negotiations), how this fit with their planned strategy, how their participation will affect their role in their chamber/caucus and their prospects for reelection.
* **Policy Paper:** An important goal of this course is for you develop an appreciation for the policy-making process. Working in a team of 2 students, you will track the path of a piece of *passed* legislation from the 109th, 110th, 111th, or 112th Congress (bills may be from any policy area but you may NOT choose one of the three bills presented in Sinclair’s case studies). Throughout your paper you should be focused on addressing how and why the bill followed the path that it did (and perhaps why it didn’t go other expected routes) and why it was able to pass. In other words you should be focused on the actors (e.g. sponsors, party and committee leaders, opposition groups, interest groups, the president) and institutions that shaped the legislation. You should of course report all floor votes. Students are free to pick their own partner; teams will be finalized in class on Monday Sept. 5.
	+ **Proposal (2%) –** 1 page (double-spaced 12-point font, 1” margins all around, page numbers on bottom right corner) proposal per team explaining what bill you would like to study and why (ie: what is its significance). No two teams may work on the same bill. Due on **Moodle by noon Oct 3**.
	+ **Draft of Chronology and Sources (3%) –** Outlined draft of the chronology of the bill’s passage (bullet points preferred) and a list of **at least ten** specific sources that you will consult for your paper. Due on **Moodle by noon Nov 9**.
	+ **Presentation (7%) –** Each team will give a 10-minute presentation detailing the legislative process by which their bill was passed during the last week of class. You are encouraged to use diagrams and/or power point slides in your presentation. Time speaking should be divided equally among the teammates; you will each receive your own grade. You will be graded on the content and organization of your portion of the presentation (5%) as well as your ability to effectively speak to the audience (2%).
	+ **Final Paper (20%) –** Each team member will submit their own final policy paper detailing the legislative process that led to the passage of the bill. Beyond the instructions listed above, your papers should begin with a 1-2 page discussion of *why* the bill was proposed (i.e. discuss its policy relevance). Of course you may consult with your partners, but the papers are to be written individually. Papers should be 12-15 pages long (double-spaced 12-point font, 1” margins all around, page numbers on bottom right corner). Final papers are due in my office, **Asbury 103, by noon on December 12.**

Other important information:

* **Late Assignments**: All assignments will be penalized 1 point (i.e. 1% of your grade) for each day they are late.
* **News and Resources**: Students are **REQUIRED** to stay up to date on current events involving Congress. While following national newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, or (especially) *The Washington Post* regularly will help you stay on top of the news, you should also consider subscribing to daily news updates from the following DC-based papers: *Politico*, *Roll Call*, *National Journal*, and *The Hill*. In addition, “Thomas” (Library of Congress) is of most important sources of information regarding legislation, and you will need to become familiar with using it ([www.Thomas.gov](http://www.Thomas.gov)). There is a library guide for Congress available online at Roy O. West, which you may find especially helpful information about representatives’ districts/states.
* **Technology:**
	+ **Laptops** are **not** welcome in class, unless I instruct you to bring one. Should you need to use a laptop please provide proper documentation from DePauw’s Office of Disability Services.
	+ All **cell** **phones/Blackberries**, etc. should be **shut** **off** or set to **silent** – NOT VIBRATE – before arriving to class. The use or interruption of these devises during regular class time will result in a **reduction of your participation grade**.
* **Academic Dishonesty –** Students are expected to abide by DePauw’s Academic Integrity policy, available in the *Student Handbook*. Cheating in any form, including plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism is copying from any source material (direct or paraphrasing of ideas), published or unpublished (this includes wikipedia!), without giving proper credit**. When in doubt, I prefer that you cite!** I will post a link to the **Chicago Manual of Style citation format on Moodle**, although you are free to use any citation method you choose, as long as you are consistent. If caught cheating, you are liable to be failed for the assignment, failed for the course, placed on academic probation, or suspended from the university, depending on circumstances.
* **Communication and Email:** When emailing me please include your course number in the subject line. A note on etiquette: please use appropriate salutations and include your name in the closing. (Hint: you can’t go wrong with “Hi Professor Gallagher”.) Please articulate the content of your message clearly and do not use text message or instant message speak. Finally, before you email me please check the syllabus and the announcements page of the moodle site to be sure that the answer to your question has not been previously addressed.
* **Students with Disabilities:** In compliance with the American Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibit discrimination based on disability, DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and university-administered activities and reasonable modifications to students with disabilities. Students in need of special accommodations need to make the request for such services with the Coordinator of Student Disabilities Services, Pamela Roberts, 765-658-6267, Harrison Hall 302, as soon as possible. Please make an appointment to meet with me after you have received your letter from DSO.
* **This syllabus is subject to changes throughout the semester**

**Course Schedule**

Wednesday, Aug. 24 (Class 1) – Introduction

* Ornstein. 2011. “Worst. Congress. Ever.” *Foreign Policy* <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/07/19/worst_congress_ever?page=full>
* Roll Call (8/15/11) “Clock is Running for Joint Deficit Panel” <http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_22/clock-running-for-joint-deficit-panel-208127-1.html>
* NYT “Amid Scepticism Debt Panel is Pressed for a Deal” <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/18/us/politics/18congress.html?_r=1&ref=jointcongressionalcommitteeondeficitreduction>
* Roll Call (8/15/11) “K Street Prepares for Super Panel Session” <http://www.rollcall.com/issues/57_22/K-Street-Prepares-for-the-Super-Panel-Season-208121-1.html>
* Politico (8/16/11) “Supercommittee Runs Risk of Turf War” <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0811/61436.html>
* WaPo (8/18/11) “Debt Supercommittee Lacks Diversity” <http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/debt-supercommittees-membership-dominated-by-white-men/2011/08/12/gIQA6u6NFJ_story.html>

Monday, Aug 29 (class 2) – Powers and Representation

* U.S. Constitution Article I Sec 8
* Davidson, Oleszek and Lee (*hereafter DOL*) Ch.1: The Two Congresses
* Federalist Papers 10, 51, 57
* Bessette Chs 1-3 of *The Mild Voice of Reason*

Wednesday, Aug 31 – NO CLASS: APSA

* Watch Dateline “Taking the Hill: Inside Congress” aired July 31, 2011 <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/30892505/>
* Familiarize yourself with the members of the Deficit Supercommittee and Congressional leadership (start here: <http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0811/61068.html>)
* **Complete Simulation Survey by** **\*\*noon on Friday September 2**

Monday, Sept 5 (class 3) Historical Context

* DOL Ch. 2: Evolution of the Modern Congress
* Nelson Polsby. 1968. The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives” *American Political Science Review*. 144-168.

Wednesday, Sept 7 (class 4) – Running For Congress

* DOL Ch. 3: Going for It: Recruitment and Candidacy
* DOL Ch. 4: Making It: The Electoral Game
* **CE Group 1**

Monday, Sept 12 (class 5) –Staying In Congress

* Mayhew Part 1: The Electoral Incentive
* DOL Ch. 5: Being There: Hill Styles and Home Styles
* **\*\*Resource Brief uploaded to Moodle by noon**

Wednesday, Sept 14 (class 6) - Maintaining the Electoral Connection

* Mayhew Part 2: Processes and Policies pgs. 81-158 ONLY
* **CE Group 2**

Monday, Sept 19 (class 7) – Overview of Policies for the Supercommitte Simulation

* Mayhew Foreword and Preface

Wednesday, Sept. 21 (class 8) – Committees in Congress

* DOL Ch. 7: Committees: Workshops of Congress
* **CE Group 3**

Monday, Sept 26 (class 9) – Decision Making

* DOL Ch. 9: Decision Making in Congress
* **\*\*Background on Simulation Role due in class**

Wednesday, Sept. 28 (class 10) – Introduction to Leadership

* DOL Ch. 6: Leaders and Parties in Congress
* **CE Group 4**

Monday, Oct. 3 (class 11) – Principal Agent Theory Vs. Personality

* Sinclair “Transformational Leader or Faithful Agent”
* Strahan Chs. 1: Leading Representatives & 2: Explaining Congressional Leadership
* **\*\*Team Policy Proposal uploaded to Moodle by noon**

Wednesday, Oct. 5 (class 12) – Case Study of Newt Gingrich

* Strahan Ch. 5: Newt Gingrich: The Transformative Leader as Speaker
* **CE Group 5**

Monday, Oct. 10 (class 13) – Leadership in the New American Politics

* Peters and Rosenthal. 2010. “Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the New American Politics.” *excerpt*
* **\*\*Two questions for discussion with Dr. Strahan uploaded by noon.**

Wednesday, Oct. 12 (class 14) – Application of Leadership Theories

* Strahan Ch 6: Conclusion
* **CE Group 6**
* **\*\*Essay: Application of Leadership Theories to Speaker Boehner’s tenure due in class**.

Monday, Oct 17 & Wednesday, Oct 19 – NO CLASS: FALL BREAK

Monday, Oct. 24 (class 15) – Super Committee Simulation

Day 1 – Opening Statements from Committee Members (12)

* **\*\*Short Paper: Policy Positions**

Wednesday, Oct. 26 (class 16) – Super Committee Simulation

Day 2 – Opening Statements from Leadership (8)

Monday, Oct. 31 (class 17) – Super Committee Simulation

Day 3 – Proposals Offered, Discussed, Voting

**\*Press Release Uploaded to Moodle by noon, Wed. Nov 2**

Wednesday, Nov. 2 (class 18) – Congress and the President

* TBD
* **CE Group 7**

Monday, Nov. 7 (class 19) – Congress and the President: Foreign Policy

* TBD

Wednesday, Nov. 9 (class 20)

* Sinclair Ch. 1 & Ch 6
* **\*\*Policy Paper: Chronology of Passage and sources uploaded to Moodle by noon.**
* **CE Group 8**

Monday, Nov. 14 (class 21)

* Sinclair Ch. 2
* Sinclair Ch 3.

Wednesday, Nov. 16 (class 22)

* Sinclair Ch 4
* **CE Group 9**

Monday, Nov. 21 (class 23)

* Sinclair Ch. 5
* Sinclair Ch. 9

Wednesday, Nov 23 – NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

Monday, Nov. 28 (class 24) –

* Sinclair Ch. 7
* Sinclair Ch. 8

Wednesday, Nov. 30 (class 25) –

* Sinclair Ch 10: The Consequences of Unorthodox Lawmaking
* **CE Group 10**

Monday, Dec. 5 (class 26)

* Policy Presentations

Wednesday, Dec. 7 (class 27)

* Policy Presentations

**\*\*Final Policy Papers Due to Asbury 103 by noon Monday, December 12**