

POSC 4201-101  
 Marquette University  
 U.S. Congress  
 Fall Semester 2014  
 MWF 10:00 – 10:50

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 Office Hours: MW 11:30 – 1:30; T 9-12; F 12-1; and by appt.

Course Objectives:

The United States Congress is the oldest popularly elected legislature in the world. Congress has the dual responsibility to represent the interests of the country's citizens and to make law and policy for the nation; both of those roles will be studied closely, paying attention to historical context. The course will also look at Congress' organization as a factor in its development, as well as Congress' relationship with the other branches of government. Special attention will be paid to current issues in Congress, such as party polarization and the fall 2014 midterm elections.

Upon completing the course students will be able to identify and explain the powers of the U.S. Congress and the system of checks and balances between Congress and the other branches of government. Students will also be able to gather information from credible sources and be able to construct analytical arguments using clear, logical prose.

Required Book:

*Congress and its Members* (2012) 13<sup>th</sup> edition, Roger H. Davidson, Walter J. Oleszek, and Frances E. Lee. Congressional Quarterly Press, a division of Sage.

*The American Senate: An Insider's Story* (2013) Neil MacNeil and Richard A. Baker, Oxford University Press.

Other readings will be available on D2L.

Selected online resources for reading and research:

[www.house.gov/](http://www.house.gov/)  
[www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov/)  
[Congress.org](http://Congress.org)  
 THOMAS at Library of Congress [thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)  
 Opencrs.com (reports of Congressional Research Service)  
[fpc.state.gov/c18185.htm](http://fpc.state.gov/c18185.htm) (more reports of Congressional Research Service)  
 Association of Centers for the Study of Congress (<http://www.congresscenters.org/web>)  
 CQ Researcher (Marquette Library)  
 CQ Congress Collection (Marquette Library)  
[Opensecrets.org](http://Opensecrets.org)  
[Opengovernment.org](http://Opengovernment.org)  
 Rollcall.com – news about politics in DC  
 Thehill.com – news about politics in DC

### Course Requirements:

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| 2 exams                  | 40% |
| 3 campaign essays        | 45% |
| Attendance/Participation | 15% |

### Campaign Essays

Each student will become an expert in one state's fall congressional races. We will have some sort of lottery to ensure that there is only one student per state. Students will use the knowledge of their state's midterm races to write three essays on topics that will be discussed in class. Requirements for the essays will be distributed in class.

### Exams

There will be a midterm and final exam. Any student who has an A grade at the end of the semester is exempt from the final exam. It cannot be borderline – it has to be a clear 93 or above. I know some of you will ask me to round up anyway, but the answer will be no.

### Participation

Students are expected to do the readings before each class and contribute regularly to class discussion. Participation will be evaluated not simply on the quantity of class participation, but whether the participation reflects knowledge and understanding of course readings. Take note that participation is a consequential portion of the grade for the course.

### Attendance

Attendance is expected at each class, and a sign-in sheet will be provided at each class meeting. Do NOT sign in for classmates if they are absent. Signing someone else's name in their absence will be treated as academic dishonesty. If a student misses 6 or fewer classes during the semester attendance will not factor for the final grade at all. If a student misses more than 6 classes a grade of WA (Withdrawal-Excessive Absences) can be assigned.

The Marquette University Undergraduate Attendance Policy (revised in June 2011) states the following:

“Students are responsible for attending all class meetings for courses in which they are registered. Any absence, regardless of the reason, prevents students from getting the full benefit of the course and as such, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences, with the following exceptions:

1. Absences resulting from legal obligations (such as jury duty).
2. Absences resulting from university sanctioned activities and related travel.”

The Policy also states “the Marquette University Student Health Service does not provide documentation of illness, or of a visit to the Student Health Service. Likewise, college and other university offices (e.g., Office of the Dean, Counseling Center and Student Affairs) do not provide documentation of an absence on behalf of the student.”

In cases of excessive absences, the Marquette Undergraduate Attendance Policy will be followed. “For courses in which attendance is regularly taken, an instructor or college office

may withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences and assign a grade of WA (Withdrawn-Excessive Absences)...**Students who miss more than 6 classes in a 3 credit course that meets 50 minutes, 3 times per week, will be considered to have excessive absences and may be assigned a WA.**

Those who are involved in university sanctioned activities should submit a schedule of anticipated absences within the first 2 weeks of class, and also come talk to the instructor well in advance of any other university sanctioned activity that will result in a missed assignment/quiz/exam.

### Academic Integrity

#### Marquette Honor Pledge

*I recognize the importance of personal integrity in all aspects of life and work.*

*I commit myself to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, by which I earn the respect of others.*

*I support the development of good character, and commit myself to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity as an important aspect of personal integrity.*

*My commitment obliges me to conduct myself according to the Marquette University Honor Code.*

More information on Marquette's policy on Academic Integrity can be found at <http://www.marquette.edu/provost/integrity-index.php>.

Any incidents of academic dishonesty, such as cheating, dishonest conduct, or plagiarism will be punished to the fullest extent allowed by Marquette University policy.

### **Grading Scale:**

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| 93-100       | A   |
| 88-92        | A/B |
| 83-87        | B   |
| 78-82        | B/C |
| 73-77        | C   |
| 69-72        | C/D |
| 61-68        | D   |
| 60 and below | F   |

### **Course Schedule**

Mon., Aug. 25 – Course Introduction

Wed., Aug. 27 – The State of Congress

“The Seeds of Dysfunction,” *It’s Even Worse than we Thought: How the American Constitution Collided with the New Politics of Extremism*, Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein, 2012 (available online at Marqcat, in Part I, beginning on p. 31)

“Is Congress “the Broken Branch?” *Boston University Law Review*, David Mayhew, 2009 (D2L)

Fri., Aug. 29- NO CLASS, APSA CONVENTION

Mon., Sept. 1 – NO CLASS, LABOR DAY

Wed., Sept. 3 – Midterms 2014 – State/Race Assignments

You should have done enough research to identify several states you would be interesting in studying.

**Topic 1 – The Institution**

Fri., Sept. 5 – The Modern Congress

*Congress and its Members*, Chs. 1 and 2, “The Two Congresses” and “Evolution of the Modern Congress”

Mon., Sept. 8 – Rules of the Game

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 8 “Congressional Rules and Procedures”

*The American Senate*, “Ch. 12 “Dilatory Tactics”

Wed., Sept. 10 – Leaders and Parties

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 6 “Leaders and Parties in Congress”

*The American Senate*, Ch. 8 “Leadership Empowered”

Fri., Sept. 12 – Senate Leadership

*The American Senate*, Ch. 7, “The Center to Which Everyone Comes”

Mon. Sept. 15 – Committees

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 7 “Committees: Workshops of Congress”

“How a Bill Becomes a Law,” *All Roads Lead to Congress: The \$300 Billion Fight over Highway Funding*, Costas Panagopoulos and Joshua Schank, 2008, CQ Press (D2L)

Wed., Sept. 17 – Decision-making

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 9 “Decisionmaking in Congress”

“The Strategic Agenda in Legislative Politics,” *American Political Science Review*, Calvin J. Mouw and Michael B. McKuen, 1992 (D2L)

Fri., Sept. 19 – *Congress and its Members*, Ch. 5 “Being There: Hill Styles and Home Styles”

*The American Senate*, Ch. 11 “Debate, Deliberation, and Dispute”

Mon., Sept. 22 – Interbranch Relations

*The American Senate*, Ch. 6 “Living with the House of Representatives”

## **Topic 2 – Campaigns and Elections**

Wed., Sept. 24 – Getting into Office

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 3 “Going for it: Recruitment and Candidacy”

Fri., Sept. 26 – Campaigns

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 4 “Making it: The Electoral Game”

“When Facts are Weapons,” *The Economist*, May 3, 2014 (D2L)

Mon., Sept. 29 – Republican Primaries

“Chastened GOP Tries to Foil Insurgents at Primary Level,” *The New York Times*, Feb. 9, 2014 (D2L)

“In Open Primary Southern States, Black Voters Flex new Muscle,” June 28, 2014, *The Christian Science Monitor* (D2L)

Wed., Oct. 1 – Money,

Trevor Potter on The Colbert Report – video clips in class

Browse through [opensecrets.org](http://opensecrets.org)

### **Background/Issues Essay Due**

Fri., Oct 3 - Money in Historical Perspective

*The American Senate*, Chs. 1 and 2 “Money and Politics: Electing US Senators” and “The Collapse of Campaign Finance Reform”

Mon., Oct. 6 – *Mr. Cao Goes to Washington*

Documentary film in class

Wed., Oct. 8 – *Mr. Cao Goes to Washington*

Fri., Oct. 10 – **Midterm Exam**

Mon., Oct. 13 – A Comparative Perspective

“Democratic Electoral Systems around the World, 1946-2000, Elsevier, 2005 (D2L)

## **Topic 3 – Congress and the other Branches**

Wed., Oct. 15 – Congress and the President

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 10 “Congress and the President”

OCTOBER 16 – 19 FALL BREAK

Mon., Oct. 20 – Unilateral Action

“Strategies, Tactics, and Political Realities of Executive Orders,” *By Order of the President: The Use and Abuse of Executive Direct Action*, Phillip J. Cooper, 2002 (D2L)

“REAL ID Act Delayed,” *American City and Council*, 2011 (D2L)

Wed., Oct. 22 – Congress and the President

*The American Senate*, Chs. 3 and 4 “Dancing with Presidents: A Wary Embrace” and “Struggling for Primacy: From TR to FDR”

Fri., Oct. 24 - Congress and the Courts

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 12 “Congress and the Courts”

Mon., Oct. 27 – Congress and the Bureaucracy

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 11 “Congress and the Bureaucracy”

Wed., Oct. 29 – Oversight

*The American Senate*, Chs. 9 and 10 “The Senate Investigates” and “The Watchdogs”

Fri., Oct. 31- *A Perfect Candidate* – documentary about Oliver North’s 1994 Run for U.S. Senate

Mon., Nov. 3 – *A Perfect Candidate*

**Campaign Prediction Essay Due**

Wed., Nov. 5 – Election Debrief

Fri., Nov. 7 – Bureaucratic Discretion in Implementation of Laws

“Laws, Institutions, and Policymaking,” *Deliberate Discretion? The Institutional Foundations of Bureaucratic Autonomy*, John D. Huber and Charles R. Shipan, Cambridge University Press, 2002 (D2L)

#### **Topic 4 – Policy**

Mon., Nov. 10 – Ideology and Policy

“The Operational-Symbolic Disconnect,” *Ideology in America*, Christopher Ellis and James A. Stimson, 2012, Cambridge University Press (D2L)

Wed., Nov. 12 – Congress and the Budget

*Congress and its Members*, Ch. 14 “Congress, Budgets and Domestic Policymaking”

Fri., Nov. 14 – The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 and “Revenue Enhancers in 1982

“Rosty’s Rotunda,” *Mr. Chairman: Power in Dan Rostenkowski’s America*, James L. Merriner, 1999 (D2L)

Mon., Nov. 17 –1986 Tax Reform Act

“Write Rosty,” *Mr. Chairman: Power in Dan Rostenkowski’s America*, James L. Merriner, 1999 (D2L)

Wed., Nov. 19 – Safe, Affordable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) – passed in 2005

“Floor Fight,” *All Roads Lead to Congress: The \$300 Billion Fight over Highway Funding*, Costas Panagopoulos and Joshua Schank, 2008, CQ Press (D2L)

“NO on Highway Transportation and Funding Act of 2014 (H.R. 5021),” *Heritage Foundation*, 2014 (D2L)

Fri., Nov. 21 – Foreign Policy

“Overcoming Foreign Policy Disunity,” *The National Interest*, Richard Lugar, 2012 (D2L)

### **Analysis Essay Due**

Mon., Nov. 24 – Policy Implementation

“Implementation as Evolution,” *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland; Or, Why it’s Amazing that Federal Programs Work at All...*, Giandomenico Majone and Aaron Wildavsky, 1979 (D2L)

NOVEMBER 26 – 30, THANKSGIVING BREAK

Mon., Dec. 1 – Congress and Interest Groups

*Congress and its Members, Ch. 13* “Congress and Organized Interests”

Wed., Dec. 3 – Freedom of Speech v. Improper Influence

Jack Abramoff – 60 minutes video in class

Fri., Dec. 5 – Catch-up and Wrap-up

**FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, DECEMBER 8 FROM 8 AM – 10 AM**

