FOCUS

This course is designed to explain and evaluate the legislative branch of the U.S. government, the Congress of the United States. The course will focus on several major areas pertinent to any serious analysis of the Congress: 1) patterns and dynamics of congressional change, 2) elections and constituencies, 3) parties and committees, 4) Congress and public policy, and 5) Congress and political change.

TEXTS

Required:


Recommended:


There will also be additional readings handed out over the course of the semester.
REQUIREMENTS

Midterm Examination 20%
Research Paper 20%
Journal Entries 20%
Final Examination 20%
Class Citizenship 20%

The midterm examination and the final examination will both be in essay format.

CLASS POLICIES

1) Students are responsible for all materials covered in the lectures and assigned readings. You must read the relevant chapters before the lecture pertaining to those readings.

2) Failure to attend class, tardiness and failure to participate in class discussion will negatively affect your grade in this class (class citizenship portion of the course grade).

3) Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will be punished to the fullest extent allowable by the Academic Committee at the University of St. Thomas. (See Below)

4) Other than in exceptional cases of personal or family emergencies, no-make-ups will be given for students missing any of the regularly scheduled assignments during the semester. In addition, each calendar day late that an assignment is, will result in a reduction of a full letter grade.

5) A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will not be given in the course except in the most extraordinary of circumstances.

PLAGIARISM

The following are some dictionary definitions of plagiarism:

• “The action of copying someone else’s idea or work or pretending that you thought of it or created it” (Collins).

• “To take words, ideas, etc., from someone else’s work and use them in one’s own work without admitting one has done so” (Longman).

• “To steal or pass off as one’s own the ideas or words of another” (Webster).

**Plagiarism also includes**:  

• “Double-dipping - This is submitting a paper or other assignment which had previously earned credit from another course.”

• “Text recycling - Reusing in a new assignment large portions of a previously submitted paper(s) or other written assignment (computer code, speech, etc.) without acknowledging their former use.”

**Common student misconceptions on plagiarism**:  

• “Many students believe that as long as a citation is included, they can simply appropriate portions of text from another source and use that text as their own writing.”

• “Many are also confused as to what constitutes common knowledge believing that anything on the Internet is common knowledge.”

**Some General Tips to Students**:  

• **Citation Guidelines**
  
  - Common Knowledge: Did you look up the information? If so, then a citation is needed
  
  - An emphasis should be placed on proper paraphrasing

• **Student assignments should always be crafted and turned in with the understanding that the professor will be operating under the assumption that**:  
  
  - unless otherwise properly noted in the assignment, the assignment submitted is the student’s own.

  - the representation of their own or others’ work is accurate (e.g., data fabrication).

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2 Dr. Miguel Roig (University of St. Thomas Spring 2004 Faculty Study Day Speaker, January 12, 2004.
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- that the assignment turned in/presented is exclusive to that course.

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS, LECTURES, AND EXAMS**

January 20 – Introduction to the Course

**Topic One: Patterns and Dynamics of Congressional Change**

The New World of U.S. Senators, Barbara Sinclair, D&O, Chp. 1

Lending and Reclaiming Power: Majority Leadership in the House Since the 1950s, John H. Aldrich and David W. Rohde, D&O, Chp. 2

Black-Latino Relations in Congress: Examining Institutional Context and Inter-Minority Group Relations, Rodney Hero and Robert H. Preuhs, D&O, Chp. 3

**Topic Two: Elections and Constituencies**

The Context, Gary Jacobson and Jamie L. Carson, Chp. 2

Congressional Candidates, Gary Jacobson and Jamie L. Carson, Chp. 3

Congressional Campaigns, Gary Jacobson and Jamie L. Carson, Chp. 4

Congressional Voters, Gary Jacobson and Jamie L. Carson, Chp. 5

National Politics and Congressional Elections, Gary Jacobson and Jamie L. Carson, Chp. 6

**Topic Three: Parties and Committees**

The Dynamics of Party Government in Congress, Steven S. Smith and Gerald Gamm, D&O, Chp. 7

Legislating in Polarized Times, Sarah Binder, D&O, Chp. 8

Legislative Effectiveness and Representation, Craig Volden and Alan E. Wiseman, D&O, Chp. 9

Filibusters and Majority Rule in the Senate, Gregory Kroger, D&O, Chp. 10

**Topic Four: Congress, the President, and Public Policy**

Is Advice and Consent Broken? The Contentious Politics of Confirming Federal Judges and Justices, Sarah A. Binder and Forrest Maltzman, D&O, Chp. 11
ANWR and CAFÉ: Frustrating Energy Production and Conservation Initiatives in Congress over Three Decades, Bruce I. Oppenheimer, Chp. 12

The Endurance of Non-Partisanship in House Appropriations, Peter C. Hanson, D&O, Chp. 13

Congress, Public Opinion, and the Political Costs of Waging War, Douglas Kriner, D&O, Chp. 14

The Balance of Power Between the Congress and the President: Issues and Dilemmas, Joseph Cooper, D&O, Chp. 15

**Topic Five: Congress and Political Change**

Moderate Polarization and Policy Productivity in Congress: From Harding to Obama, Lawrence C. Dodd and Scot Schraufnagel, D&O, Chp. 16

An Examination of Efforts to Repeal the Affordable Care Act, Jordan Ragusa, D&O, Chp. 17

Congress in the Age of Trump: The 2016 National Elections and Their Aftermath, Bruce I. Oppenheimer and Lawrence C. Dodd, D&O, Chp. 18

**Important Dates:**
- No Class, March 13 – 17, Spring Break
- Midterm Examination, Friday, March 24
- No Class, April 13 - 14, Easter Break
- 2017 UST Research Symposium, April 6-7
- No Class, Friday, April 21, ACTC Annual Conference (Tentative)
- Friday, May 5, Journals are due
- Friday, May 5, Research Paper is due
- Monday, May 15, Final Examination: 8:30-11AM

**PAPER REQUIREMENTS**

The paper must be 8 to 10 pages in length (graduate students, 15 to 20 pages in length). It must be typed, double-spaced, paginated, stapled and must use an academically accepted format for footnotes, citations and reference pages. A list of possible paper topics will be handed out next week. The topic, once chosen, will have to be turned in to the instructor on March 24. This will have to be accompanied by a brief bibliography. Since this is a research project, 6 to 8 sources must be cited, with at least four being from recent scholarly publications. In addition, periodicals, magazines and newspapers may be used. Some of the major scholarly journals in political science are:

*American Political Science Review*
*American Journal of Political Science*
Examples of other sources are periodicals such as *The Brookings Review*, and *Cato*; magazines such as *The New Republic*, *The Progressive*, and *The National Review*; and newspapers such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *The Christian Science Monitor* and the *Washington Times*.

### JOURNALS

Students are also required to keep a journal on presidential-congressional relations as the semester and the relationship between the new Trump/Pence administration and the Republican Congress unfolds. Two to three journal entries a week should be made, and are to be from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, or another reputable news source. You can choose to focus on any article dealing with the aforementioned relationship. There should be a multitude of articles on this subject in both of the newspapers over the course of the semester. The journal entries must include the date and title of the article, and must be typed as well. These entries should be reflective pieces, which summarize and critique the evolution, or lack thereof, of executive-legislative interactions as the semester unfolds. At the end of your journal, you are required to reflect on why you think that relations between the two branches were deemed a success or failure during the period under study.