POLS 8140: Legislative Process

Fall 2023

Instructor
Dr. Michael S. Lynch
Office: Baldwin Hall 416
Email: mlynch@uga.edu
Office Hours: Wednesday
1:00PM – 3:00PM and by appointment

Class Schedule
3:55PM – 6:40PM
Baldwin Hall 202

Introduction
This course is intended to provide students with a survey of the academic literature on the U.S. Congress. The U.S. Congress is arguably the most studied political institution in the world and the amount of literature on Congress is overwhelming. This course will focus on institutional studies of the House and Senate, but will attempt to introduce all major topics common to the study of Congress. This syllabus provides a tentative reading list that is subject to change as the semester proceeds.

Readings
Required Texts
The following books are required:


Supplemental Texts
The following books, while not required for this course, are helpful references for students planning on pursuing research in legislative politics.


Additional Readings
All additional readings will be available via the web or the instructor will provide the reading to the class.

Grading and Expectations

1. **Attendance and Participate – 20% of final grade**
   
   Attend all classes having read the assigned articles. Be ready to discuss the assigned articles. To facilitate this, I want everyone to be able to answer the following 4 questions for each of the readings:
   
   1. What is the claim of the article?
   2. How does the author(s) show evidence to support the article’s claim?
   3. What is your evaluation of the article?
   4. How does the article relate to the rest of the congressional literature?

2. **Discussion Leaders and Reaction Papers – 40%**
   
   All enrolled students will serve as discussion leaders for two weeks. Auditing students will be required to serve as discussion leaders for one week. Discussion leaders will briefly present a summary of the materials assigned for the week and will lead the class in discussing and critiquing the materials. They will also find and discuss an additional reading that they think would be a good addition to the syllabus in future iterations of this course.

   Students will also be required to write three reaction papers, one for each of the two weeks they serve as a discussion leader and one for an additional week of their choosing. Reaction papers should summarize the readings’ theory, methods and findings. They should also critique the readings and compare/contrast that week’s readings. These reaction papers should be no longer than 6 pages and are due one week after a student serves as a discussion leader.
3. **Research Paper and Presentation – 40%** Each student is expected to complete and present an original research paper related to a course topic. Details about paper expectations will be discussed early in the semester. A research proposal is due October 13. A rough draft of the paper is due November 10. Conference-style presentations based on these rough drafts will occur on December 1. The final draft of the paper is will be due after the presentations. We will determine an exact due date later in the semester.

**Other Issues (in no particular order)**

1. **Disabilities:** Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to tell me at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting [http://drc.uga.edu](http://drc.uga.edu).

2. **Instructor Availability:** I am available to meet with students by appointment if anyone cannot attend my posted office hours. Please email me to schedule a meeting.

3. **Classroom Behavior:** Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Disruptive behavior in discussion sections will not be tolerated. Laptops and other electronic may be used to take notes in class, but not in a way that is disruptive to other students.

   UGA is committed to creating a dynamic, diverse, and welcoming learning environment for all students and has a non-discrimination policy that reflects this philosophy. Our class will respect all students regardless of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.

4. **Cheating and Plagiarism:** All course work must meet the standards put forth in the University of Georgia’s [Student Honor Code](http://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga). See the [Academic Honesty Policy](http://www.uhs.uga.edu/) for details on what is expected of you.

5. **FERPA Notice:** The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar’s explanation at [reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/](http://reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/).

6. **Mental Health and Wellness Resources:** If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit [https://sco.uga.edu/](https://sco.uga.edu/). They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

   UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services ([https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga)) or crisis support ([https://www.uhs.uga.edu/](https://www.uhs.uga.edu/)).
If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA for a list of free workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.

Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

7. **Artificial Intelligence-Based Software**: Artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, must not be used to generate responses for course assignments.

**Tentative Course and Topics Schedule**

**August 17**

Introduction

**August 24**

**Motives and Representation 1**


*Recommended:*


**August 31**

**Motives and Representation 2**


**Recommended:**


**September 7**

Institutional Analysis


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Recommended:


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### September 14


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Recommended:


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### September 21 (Wallack/Statile)


Recommended:


**September 28**


Thomsen, Danielle M. 2020. “Partisan Polarization in Congress.” 2020. in *New Directions in Congressional Politics*


**October 5**


**Recommended:**

Curry, James M. 2020. “Change and Continuity for Committees in Congress.” in *New Directions in Congressional Politics*


**October 12 (Research Proposal Due)**

Rules and Procedures


**Recommended:**


**October 19**


Recommended:


**October 26**


Recommended:


Lee, Frances and Bruce Oppenheimer. 1999. *Sizing up the Senate: The Unequal Consequences of Equal Representation*.

**November 2**


Recommended:


Shugart, Matthew and John Carey. 1992. Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics. (C)

November 9 (Rough Draft Due) Separation of Powers 2


Recommended:


**November 16**


*Recommended:*


**November 23**

*No Class – Thanksgiving Break*

**November 30**

*Presentations*

TBA

*Final Paper Due*