

# **POLI 461. Congress and the Presidency**

Department of Political Science  
University of South Carolina  
Fall 2022

MWF – 1:10-2:00pm  
Close-Hipp Building 201

Instructor: Dr. Joshua Meyer-Gutbrod (Dr. MG)

[meyerguj@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:meyerguj@mailbox.sc.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30-1:30

Gambrel 342

Digitally By Appointment

TA: Ryan Dennehy

[rdennehy@email.sc.edu](mailto:rdennehy@email.sc.edu)

Office Hours:

Mondays: 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Tuesdays: 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Gambrel 305

Digitally By Appointment

## **Course Overview**

### Academic Bulletin Description

Analysis of the interaction between the legislative and executive branches within a separation-of-power system.

### Course Description

This course will cover the dynamics of possible the two most prominent agenda-setting institutions in American politics: Congress and the Presidency. The course will focus on the interaction of these institutions in the formation of policy. A special focus will be paid to partisan polarization and the growth of gridlock both within Congress and between these institutions.

This course will operate on a flipped classroom. Students will be responsible for readings and some lecture content outside of class. During class time, students will have the opportunity to participate in a realistic simulation of the United States Senate. This simulation will be outlined in the SenateSim 2022 document circulated in class. Participation in the simulation represents a significant portion of your grade.

Courses are dynamic arrangements and I reserve the right to change this syllabus at my discretion at any point during the semester.

## Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

## Learning Goals

### *Official Goals*

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Identify the powers and roles of both the President and Congress in the formation of national policy.
- Identify current conflicts between the legislative and executive branches and the roots of those conflicts within the American institutional framework.
- Apply existing theories within the discipline of Political Science to explain the origins and dynamics of these conflicts.
- Identify the patterns associated with the phenomenon of modern partisan polarization and identify its role in shaping conflicts within American national government.

### *My Goal for the Course*

Learn to effectively participate in American politics by navigating our existing political institutions with the goal of effecting change and making your voice heard!

## Course Materials

### *Readings*

There is not textbook for this course. Required readings will be drawn from scholarly articles and books designed to engage you in active research within the discipline of political science. All of these readings can be found on Blackboard. Students should view lectures after having read the assigned readings for that section of the course. This approach will greatly help with understanding the material in class.

### *Software*

You will be required to access and participate in Microsoft Teams applications using your University of South Carolina log in credentials. This is free to use.

## **Course Assignments and Evaluation**

### Requirements

Midterm Exams (2 @ 20%)

There will be a midterm exam associated with each module. They will be administered through blackboard on the last Friday of the module and cover the content of that module, including lectures and readings.

**Midterm Exam – 1 – Friday, October 7**

**Midterm Exam – 2 – Monday November 21**

Reelection Packet (50%):

The Reelection Packet is the summary of your experiences within the Senate Simulation. It is worth 50% of your grade. **All the listed assignments associated with it can be found at the end of the Senate Simulation packet.** It is due during the Finals time slot for the course, **TBD**, though some of the materials are due to be graded earlier in the semester. The breakdown of the packet is as follows:

*Reelection Statement – 10% - Due Wednesday, Dec. 7 - 12:30 p.m.*

- 4-6 page assessment/defense of your performance during the Senate session given the goal of reelection.

*State and Candidate Assessment – 10% - Due Friday, September 2*

- 4-6 page assessment of a your Senator's home state and voting history.

*Legislative Effort – 20% - For a B (80) you need to have submitted at least 1 major and 3-5 minor pieces of legislation and participated regularly in committee meetings and floor votes.*

**Major Legislation Due - Friday, September 23**

4 - 1-3 page reflections connecting Simulation experiences with course materials.

*Reflection 1 Due – Friday, September 16*

*Reflection 2 Due – Friday, October 7*

*Reflection 3 Due – Friday, October 28*

*Reflection 4 Due – Friday, November 18*

Attendance (10%):

In person attendance for this class is mandatory, pending changes to University Covid Protocols. Attendance will be taken daily. In addition to attending class, students are expected to view lecture videos online.

## Class Schedule

*Introduction – Aug. 19*

- Course Role Survey Due – Monday August 22, Midnight
- SenateSim Manual 2022 – **Might want to start looking at this now.**

**Role Quiz – Due Monday August 22, Midnight**

*The Foundations – Aug. 22– Aug. 26*

- The Constitution, Article 1 and 2:  
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html>
- The Federalist Papers, #47-51, 69-74: <https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/full-text>
- SenateSim Manual 2022 – **Now you really need to read it!**

## Module 1: Congress

*Congressional Motivations – Aug. 29– Sept. 2*

- SenateSim Manual 2022 – **Again .... , yeah, I’d go ahead and reread it, you won’t regret it!**
- Mayhew, David R. "Observations on Congress: The Electoral Connection a quarter century after writing it." PS, Political Science & Politics 34.2 (2001): 251.
- Hurley, Patricia A. "David Mayhew's" Congress: The Electoral Connection" after 25 Years." PS: Political Science and Politics 34.2 (2001): 259-261.
- Abramowitz, Alan A. "" Mr. Mayhew, meet Mr. DeLay," or the Electoral Connection in the post-reform Congress." PS, Political Science & Politics 34.2 (2001): 257.

## **State and Candidate Assessment – Due Friday, September 2**

### *Congressional Activity I - Origins – Sept. 5– Sept. 9– No Class Monday Sept. 5*

- Aldrich, John H. Why parties?: The origin and transformation of political parties in America. University of Chicago Press, 1995. – Ch. 2 (Optional-Ch. 1)
- (OPTIONAL) Barry Weingast and William Marshall, "The Industrial Organization of Congress," Journal of Political Economy 96 (1988): 132-63.

### *Congressional Activity II – The Modern Congress – Sept. 12 – Sept. 16*

- Cox, Gary W., and Matthew D. McCubbins. Setting the agenda: Responsible party government in the US House of Representatives. Cambridge University Press, 2005. –Ch. 2
- Sinclair, Barbara. "Spoiling the sausages? How a polarized Congress deliberates and legislates." Red and Blue Nation 2 (2008): 55-87.

## **Reflection 1 Due – Friday, September 16**

### *Congressional Oversight – Sept. 19 – Sept. 23*

- McCubbins Matthew, and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols vs. Fire Alarms," American Journal of Political Science 28, (1): 165-179.
- (Optional) Ainsworth, Scott H., Brian M. Harward, and Kenneth W. Moffett. "Congressional response to presidential signing statements." American Politics Research 40.6 (2012): 1067-1091.

## **Major Legislation Due Friday, September 23**

### *Congressional Outputs – Ideology and Policy – Sept. 26 – Sept. 30*

- Binder, Sarah A. Stalemate: Causes and consequences of legislative gridlock. Brookings Institution Press, 2004. – Ch. 4
- Hare, C., & Poole, K. T. (2014). The polarization of contemporary American politics. Polity, 46(3), 411-429.

### *Polarization and Elected Officials – Oct. 3 – Oct. 7*

- Lee, F. E. (2016). *Insecure majorities: Congress and the perpetual campaign*. University of Chicago Press. - Ch. 2-3

## **Reflection 2 Due, Friday, October 7**

## **Midterm Exam - 1 – Friday, October 7**

## **Module 2: The Presidency**

### *Presidential Politics – Oct. 10 - Oct. 14*

#### ***Fall Break - No Class Friday Oct. 14***

- Skowroneck, Stephen. 1997. *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*. Harvard University Press – Chapter 2-3
- Lemieux, Scott. 1/23/2017 “Is Donald Trump the Next Jimmy Carter?”. *The New Republic*

### *Presidential Strategies – Oct. 17 – Oct. 21*

- Kernell, S. 2006. *Going public: New strategies of presidential leadership*. Ch Press. – Ch. 2
- Beckmann, Matthew. 2010. *Pushing the Agenda: Presidential Leadership in US Lawmaking 1953-2004*. Cambridge University Press. - Ch. 2

### *Swaying Opinion – Oct 24 – Oct. 28*

- Jacobs, L. R., & Shapiro, R. Y. (2000). *Politicians don't pander: Political manipulation and the loss of democratic responsiveness*. University of Chicago Press. - Ch. 2

## **Reflection 3 Due, Friday, October 28**

### *Competition for the Public – Oct. 31 – Nov. 4*

- Christenson, Dino P., and Douglas L. Kriner. "Mobilizing the public against the president: Congress and the political costs of unilateral action." *American Journal of Political Science* 61.4 (2017): 769-785.
- Cameron, Charles, and Jee-Kwang Park. "Going Public When Opinion Is Contested: Evidence from Presidents' Campaigns for Supreme Court Nominees, 1930-2009." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41.3 (2011): 442-470.

### *Unilateral Action – Nov. 7 – Nov. 11*

- Moe, Terry M., and William G. Howell. "Unilateral action and presidential power: A theory." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 29.4 (1999): 850-873.

### *Vetoes – Nov. 14 - Nov. 18*

- Cameron, Charles, and Nolan McCarty. "Models of vetoes and veto bargaining." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 7 (2004): 409-435.

## **Reflection 4 Due, Friday, November 18**

*Nov. 21 – Nov. 25 - No Class Wednesday Nov. 23 an Friday Nov. 25*

## **Midterm Exam - 2 – Monday November 21**

*End of Simulation Session Week – Nov. 28 - Dec. 2*

- This is your last chance to push through legislation!
- **Also, complete your packets!**

**FINAL EXAM – Packets will be due and we will hold one final session - Wednesday, Dec. 7 - 12:30 p.m.**

## **Course Details**

### Course Format

The class structure will consist of learning modules (“Course Modules”). These modules will be divided into weekly sub-modules which will include:

- A summary of that week’s material, a to-do list, due dates and other notes.
- Short Videos of PowerPoint-type lectures, and links to videos, animations and other materials related to the subject.
- The class notes / slides in PDF format.

Assignments for each course module will include:

- Participation in SenateSim throughout the module
- A midterm exam at the end of the module. (The final exam will occur upon completion of the final module in lieu of a midterm and will be cumulative)

### General Assignment Information

- All coursework (assignments, exams, etc.) is secured in Blackboard or Microsoft Teams with a username and password.
- All online tests are secured in Blackboard with a password.

### Feedback on assignments

Some of the assignments are automatically graded on Blackboard. Other assignments will be graded as soon as possible. Specific feedback will be provided as necessary through Blackboard.

### Course Communication

If you need to get in touch with me, the best method is via email. Generally, I will reply to emails within 24 hours during the work week and will provide feedback on assignments within 72 hours. Office hours are posted at the top of the Syllabus and also available by appointment.

If you are having trouble with this course or its material, you should contact me via email to discuss the issues.

Announcements will be posted to this course whenever necessary. If there is any other information I think is important, I will send it to your email address you have in Blackboard. It is your responsibility to ensure that your email account works properly in order to receive email.

Below is how you check your email address in Blackboard:

- Access [blackboard.sc.edu](http://blackboard.sc.edu)
- Click your name on the main Blackboard navigation panel on the left
- Review your email address. By default, Blackboard uses your university-issued email address
- Your email address in Blackboard coincides with your preferred university email. If you are unsure of your preferred email, [check your account \(myaccount.sc.edu\)](#). For more information on setting your preferred university email, please see the [How To Change Your Primary University Email Address \(https://scprod.service-now.com/sp?id=kb\\_article\\_view&sysparm\\_article=KB0011464\)](https://scprod.service-now.com/sp?id=kb_article_view&sysparm_article=KB0011464) Knowledge Base article.

### Module Schedule

All course deadlines are listed in Eastern Time Zone. Blackboard will record all deadlines in this time zone. If you are in a different time zone, plan accordingly. Each week will begin on a Monday and will end on Friday.

### Technology Requirements

You must have access to the Internet to view/hear lectures, take exams, and participate in some simulation activities. No special software is required.

The PowerPoint lecture presentations, links to articles, assignments, quizzes, and rubrics are located on the Blackboard site for the course. Videos will be posted to YouTube. To participate in learning activities and complete assignments, you will need:

- Access to a working computer that has a current operating system with updates installed, plus speakers or headphones to hear lecture presentations (transcripts provided);
- Reliable Internet access and a USC email account;
- A current Internet browser that is compatible with Blackboard (Google Chrome is the recommended browser for Blackboard);
- Microsoft Word as your word processing program; and
- Reliable data storage for your work, such as a USB drive or Office365 OneDrive cloud storage.

If your computer does not have Microsoft Word, Office 365 ProPlus package is available to you free of charge and allows you to install Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote, Publisher, and Access on up to 5 PCs or Macs and Office apps on other mobile

devices including tablets. Office 365 also includes unlimited cloud storage on OneDrive. To download Office 365 ProPlus, log into your student (University) email through a web browser, choose Settings (top right corner), and select software. If you have further questions or need help with the software, please contact the [Service Desk](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/servicedesk.php) ([https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/university\\_technology\\_services/support/servicedesk.php](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/servicedesk.php)).

### **Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

Minimal technical skills are needed in this course. All work in this course must be completed and submitted online through Blackboard. Therefore, you must have consistent and reliable access to a computer and the Internet. The minimal technical skills you have include the ability to:

- Organize and save electronic files;
- Use USC email and attached files;
- Check email and Blackboard daily;
- Download and upload documents;
- Locate information with a browser; and
- Use Blackboard.

### **Technical Support**

If you have problems with your computer, technology, IT-related questions, support, including Blackboard, please contact the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) Service Desk at (803) 777-1800 or submit an online request through the [Self-Service Portal](https://scprod.service-now.com/sp) (<https://scprod.service-now.com/sp>) or visit the [Carolina Tech Zone](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/ctz.php) ([https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/university\\_technology\\_services/support/ctz.php](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/university_technology_services/support/ctz.php)). The Service Desk is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM (Eastern Daylight Time). If you are located in the Columbia, SC area, the Thomas Cooper Library at USC has computers for you to use in case you encounter computer issues/problems. If you are not located in the Columbia, SC area, most regional campuses and public libraries have computers for public use.

## **Final Notes**

### **Honor Code**

Every student has a role in maintaining the academic reputation of the university. It is imperative that you refrain from engaging in plagiarism, cheating, falsifying your work and/or assisting other students in violating the Honor Code. Two important components of the Honor Code:

Faculty members are required to report potential violations of the Honor Code to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity.

When a student is uncertain as to whether conduct would violate the Honor Code, it is their responsibility to seek clarification from the appropriate faculty member.



Your enrollment in this class signifies your willingness to accept these responsibilities and uphold the Honor Code of the University of South Carolina. Any deviation from this expectation can result in a (insert academic penalty here) and a referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. You can learn more about the University's policies on academic integrity at:

[https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/student\\_conduct\\_and\\_academic\\_integrity/index.php](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/student_conduct_and_academic_integrity/index.php)

### **Student Disability Resources**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Student Disability Resource Center: 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email [sasds@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sasds@mailbox.sc.edu), or stop by LeConte College Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Student Disability Resource Center.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

The university is committed to a campus environment that is inclusive, safe, and respectful for all persons, and one that fully embraces the Carolinian Creed. To that end, all course activities will be conducted in an atmosphere of friendly participation and interaction among colleagues, recognizing and appreciating the unique experiences, background, and point of view each student brings. You are expected at all times to apply the highest academic standards to this course and to treat others with dignity and respect.