511 Seminar: American Congress
Syllabus

Instructor: Michael S. Rocca, Associate Professor
Office: Social Science Building, Room 2043
Office Hours: Thurs 10:00am – 1:00pm
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Fall 2014
M 1:30-4:00pm
SSCI 2069

Scope and Purpose
This course is designed to provide an overview of significant research on the U.S. Congress. We shall be focusing on major books and articles concerning various substantive topics in congressional research such as congressional elections, structure and procedure, decision making and voting coalitions, and relations with the executive branch. The reading for the semester is to be construed as necessary but not sufficient preparation for comprehensive exams.

Required Texts

• All other readings are available on JSTOR, through UNM electronic libraries or will be provided to you through Learn.

Course Requirements

Research Paper (50%)
Students will prepare a research paper that addresses an interesting and important topic relating to the study of the US Congress. It is to be of at least conference-paper quality, with an original theory and findings. Students are not limited to the topics addressed in class readings. However, the professor must approve all proposals in advance. Authors will present their projects to the class on the last day of class. The final research paper will be due during finals week (date TBD). Authors will present their work to the class on the last day of class. Other deadlines are as follows:
• Week 4: Submit topic
• Week 6: Identify dependent variable and research question
• Week 8: Identify key independent variable(s), theory and hypothesis
• Week 12: Submit initial results with brief interpretation
• Week 16: Present paper to class (10 minute presentation)
• Week 17: Submit final paper

The grade will be based on the following criteria:
1) Substance (70%)
   • Ability to justify the importance of the research question
   • Quality of the literature review
   • Presence of a thoughtful theory and hypothesis
• Use of appropriate data and methods
• Careful presentation of results
• Thoughtful conclusion

2) Style (30%)
• Formatted correctly and carefully (e.g. follows Chicago Manual of Style)
• Few, if any, mechanical errors (i.e. grammar, punctuation, etc.)

Class Participation (50%)
As a graduate seminar, I expect you to have read the assigned materials and to be prepared to discuss them in class. Participation and contribution are not necessarily the same things. I expect everyone to make a contribution to our weekly discussion. Each week one or two students will guide the discussion for the class period. Your participation grade will be based on my evaluation of your contribution in our weekly discussions (as both a discussion leader and participant).

READING SCHEDULE

8/18: INTRODUCTION
8/25: NEW INSTITUTIONALISM

What is new institutionalism and why is it important?

Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions
Kenneth A. Shepsle, Barry R. Weingast
Legislative Studies Quarterly, Vol. 19, No. 2 (May, 1994), pp. 149-179

The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life
James G. March and Johan P. Olsen
The American Political Science Review, Vol. 78, No. 3 (Sep., 1984), pp. 734-749

Institutional Arrangements and Equilibrium in Multidimensional Voting Models
Shepsle, Kenneth A.

Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions
William H. Riker
The American Political Science Review, Vol. 74, No. 2 (Jun., 1980), pp. 432-446

Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms
Hall, Peter A., and Rosemary CR Taylor.

Institutionalism as a Methodology
Diermeier, Daniel, and Keith Krehbiel.
9/1: NO CLASS

9/8: CONGRESSIONAL GOALS

*What motivates members of Congress?*

**Congress: The Electoral Connection, 2nd Edition** (All)
David Mayhew

9/15: THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION

*What is representation?*

**Constituency Influence in Congress**
Warren E. Miller; Donald E. Stokes

**The Concept of Representation [Skim Chapters 4 & 5]**
Hanna Pitkin

**U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration**
Richard F. Fenno, Jr.

**Collective vs. Dyadic Representation in Congress**
Robert Weissberg

**Rethinking Representation**
Jane Mansbridge

**Representation in Congress: Constituents and Roll Calls in the 106th House**
Joshua D. Clinton

**Representation Rethought: On Trustees, Delegates, and Gyroscopes in the Study of Political Representation and Democracy**
Andrew Rehfeld

9/22: VANISHING MARGINALS
Why are congressional elections to uncompetitive?

**Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals**
David R. Mayhew
*Polity*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Spring, 1974), pp. 295-317

**Resurgent Mass Partisanship: The Role of Elite Polarization**
Marc J. Hetherington
*The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 95, No. 3 (Sep., 2001), pp. 619-631

**Diverging Parties: Social Change, Realignment, and Party Polarization (Chapters TBA)**
Jeffrey Stonecash, Mark Brewer and Mack Mariani

**Deep Red and Blue Congressional Districts**
Bruce Oppenheimer

**Don't Blame Redistricting for Uncompetitive Elections**
Alan Abramowitz, Brad Alexander, Matthew Gunning

**Drawing the Line on District Competition**
Michael P. McDonald
*PS: Political Science and Politics*  

**Drawing the Line on District Competition: A Rejoinder**
Alan Abramowitz, Brad Alexander, Matthew Gunning  

**Re-Drawing the Line on District Competition**
Michael P. McDonald  
*PS: Political Science and Politics*  

9/29: THE INCUMBENCY ADVANTAGE

*Why do incumbents win so often?*

**Incumbency, Campaign Spending, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections**
Alan I. Abramowitz  
Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?
Gary W. Cox and Jonathan N. Katz

The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did It
Morris P. Fiorina

Incumbency, Redistricting, and the Decline of Competition in U.S. House Elections
Alan I. Abramowitz, Brad Alexander, Matthew Gunning

The Incumbent in the Living Room: The Rise of Television and the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections
Markus Prior

Candidate Quality, the Personal Vote, and the Incumbency Advantage in Congress
Jamie L. Carson, Erik J. Engstrom and Jason M. Roberts

The Rising Incumbent Reelection Rate: What's Gerrymandering Got to Do with It?
John N. Friedman and Richard T. Holden

10/6: POLARIZATION IN CONGRESS

*What explains polarization in Congress why does it matter?*

Political Polarization in the American Public
Morris P. Fiorina and Samuel J. Abrams

Is Polarization a Myth?
Alan I. Abramowitz and Kyle L. Saunders

A Delayed Return to Historical Norms: Congressional Party Polarization after the Second World War
Hahrie Han, David W. Brady
*British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Jul., 2007), pp. 505-531

Does Gerrymandering Cause Polarization?
Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, Howard Rosenthal
Ideological Polarization and the Vanishing of Marginals: Retrospective Roll-Call Voting in the U.S. Congress.
Jeffrey W. Ladewig

Leapfrog Representation and Extremism: A Study of American Voters and Their Members in Congress
Joseph Bafumi and Michael Herron

10/13: PARTIES AND PARTY LEADERS

*How influential are parties and party leaders in Congress?*

The Logic of Conditional Party Government: Revisiting the Electoral Connection
J.H. Aldrich with David W. Rohde.

Legislative leviathan: party government in the House [Chapters TBA]
Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins

Uncovering the Hidden Effect of Party
Sarah A. Binder; Eric D. Lawrence; Forrest Maltzman

Estimating Party Influence in Congressional Roll-Call Voting
James M. Snyder, Jr.; Tim Groseclose

Party Discipline and Measures of Partisanship
Keith Krehbiel
*American Journal of Political Science*

Where's the Party?
Keith Krehbiel

Institutional Change in the House of Representatives, 1867-1998: A Test of Partisan and Ideological Power Balance Models
Eric Schickler

10/20: CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES (*Note: still a work in progress*)
Why do MCs organize themselves into committees, and why are committees so powerful?

Congressmen in Committees (Chapters TBA)
Richard Fenno

The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives
Nelson W. Polsby

The Committee Assignment Process and the Conditional Nature of Committee Bias
Richard L. Hall, Bernard Grofman

The Nature of Congressional Committee Jurisdictions
David C. King

The Institutional Foundations of Committee Power
Kenneth A. Shepsle, Barry R. Weingast

Why Are Congressional Committees Powerful?
Keith Krehbiel, Kenneth A. Shepsle, Barry R. Weingast
*The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 81, No. 3 (Sep., 1987), pp. 929-945

Are Congressional Committees Composed of Preference Outliers?
Keith Krehbiel

Testing Committee Composition Hypotheses for the U.S. Congress
Tim Groseclose

The Republican Revolution and the House Appropriations Committee
John H. Aldrich, David W. Rohde

Demand-Side Theory and Congressional Committee Composition: A Constituency Characteristics Approach
E. Scott Adler, John S. Lapinski

Careerism, Committee Assignments, and the Electoral Connection
Jonathan N. Katz, Brian R. Sala
Party and Committee in Distributive Politics: Evidence from Defense Spending
Thomas M. Carsey, Barry Rundquist

E. Scott Adler

Meeting Competing Demands: Committee Performance in the Postreform House
Forrest Maltzman

10/27: CONGRESSIONAL DECISION MAKING

*What explains congressional decision making, and do their decisions matter?*

The Logic of Congressional Action (Chapters TBA)
Douglas Arnold

Models of Legislative Voting
John W. Kingdon

The Strategic Timing of Position Taking in Congress: A Study of the North American Free Trade Agreement
Janet M. Box-Steppensmeier, Laura W. Arnold, Christopher J. W. Zorn

The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-96
Sarah A. Binder
*The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 93, No. 3 (Sep., 1999), pp. 519-533

Congressional Voting over Legislative Careers: Shifting Positions and Changing Constraints
Thomas Stratmann

Position Taking and Position Avoidance in the U.S. Senate
David R. Jones

Out of Step, out of Office: Electoral Accountability and House Members' Voting
Brandice Canes-Wrone, David W. Brady, John F. Cogan
11/3: INTEREST GROUPS

How to interest groups influence members of Congress?

Contributions, Lobbying, and Committee Voting in the U.S. House of Representatives
John R. Wright

Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees
Richard L. Hall, Frank W. Wayman
*The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 84, No. 3 (Sep., 1990), pp. 797-820

A Panel Probit Analysis of Campaign Contributions and Roll-Call Votes
Gregory Wawro

Earmarks as a Means and an End: The Link between Earmarks and Campaign Contributions in the U.S. House of Representatives
Michael S. Rocca and Stacy B. Gordon

Organized Interests and the Decision of Whom to Lobby in Congress
Marie Hojnacki and David C. Kimball

Counteractive Lobbying
David Austen-Smith and John R. Wright

11/10: RACE, ETHNICITY AND GENDER IN CONGRESS

In what ways do race, ethnicity and gender matter in the US Congress?

Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent "Yes"
Jane Mansbridge

Spirals of Trust? The Effect of Descriptive Representation on the Relationship between Citizens and Their Government
Claudine Gay
The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation
Claudine Gay

Are Women More Likely to Vote for Women's Issue Bills than Their Male Colleagues?
Michele L. Swers

Politics of Presence? Congresswomen and Symbolic Representation
Jennifer L. Lawless

Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?
Charles Cameron; David Epstein; Sharyn O'Halloran

Racial Redistricting and African-American Representation: A Critique of "Do Majority-Minority Districts Maximize Substantive Black Representation in Congress?"
David Lublin

11/17: CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT

*What explains presidential success in Congress?*

Measuring Presidential Success in Congress: Alternative Approaches
George C. Edwards III

The Marginal and Time-Varying Effect of Public Approval on Presidential Success in Congress
Jon R. Bond, Richard Fleisher and B. Dan Wood
*The Journal of Politics* Vol. 65, No. 1 (Feb., 2003), pp. 92-110

The Bank Account Presidency: A New Measure and Evidence on the Temporal Path of Presidential Influence
Terry Sullivan

*Can Congress control a wartime president?*

Deference and Defiance: The Shifting Rhythms of Executive-Legislative Relations in
Foreign Policy
James M. Lindsay
_Presidential Studies Quarterly_ Vol. 33, No. 3, The Permanent War (Sep., 2003), 530-546

Congress and Foreign Policy: Why the Hill Matters
James M. Lindsay

Congress, the President, and the Commitment of the U. S. Military
James Meernik

Presidents, Congress, and the Use of Force
William G. Howell and Jon C. Pevehouse

11/24: NO CLASS

12/1: CONGRESS AND THE COURTS

What explains Supreme Court confirmations? Is it time for a change in the process?

Delaying Justice(s): A Duration Analysis of Supreme Court Confirmations
Charles R. Shipan and Megan L. Shannon
_American Journal of Political Science_ Vol. 47, No. 4 (Oct., 2003), pp. 654-668

Courting Constituents? An Analysis of the Senate Confirmation Vote on Justice Clarence Thomas
L. Marvin Overby, Beth M. Henschen, Michael H. Walsh and Julie Strauss

Senate Confirmation of Supreme Court Justices: Partisan and Institutional Politics
Jeffrey Segal

Does the Congress constrain the Supreme Court?

Separation-of-Powers Games in the Positive Theory of Congress and Courts
Jeffrey A. Segal
_The American Political Science Review_ Vol. 91, No. 1 (Mar., 1997), pp. 28-44

Congressional Decision Making and the Separation of Powers
Andrew D. Martin
_The American Political Science Review_ Vol. 95, No. 2 (Jun., 2001), pp. 361-378

The Separation of Powers, Court Curbing, and Judicial Legitimacy
Congress, the Supreme Court, and Judicial Review: Testing a Constitutional Separation of Powers Model.
Segal, J. A., Westerland, C. and Lindquist, S. A.

12/8: CONGRESS AND THE BUREAUCRACY *(Note: still a work in progress)*

To what extent can Congress control the bureaucracy?

**Bureaucratic Discretion or Congressional Control? Regulatory Policymaking by the Federal Trade Commission**
Barry R. Weingast, Mark J. Moran

**Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms**
Mathew D. McCubbins, Thomas Schwartz

**An Assessment of the Positive Theory of 'Congressional Dominance'**
Terry M. Moe

**A Theory of Political Control and Agency Discretion**
Randall L. Calvert, Mathew D. McCubbins and Barry R. Weingast

**Congressional Influence on Bureaucracy**
John Ferejohn, Charles Shipan

**Administrative Procedures as Instruments of Political Control**
Mathew D. McCubbins, Roger G. Noll and Barry R. Weingast
*Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization*  

**The Political Control of Bureaucracies under Asymmetric Information**
Jeffrey S. Banks and Barry R. Weingast  
*American Journal of Political Science*  
Vol. 36, No. 2 (May, 1992), pp. 509-524

**Administrative Procedures, Information, and Agency Discretion**
David Epstein and Sharyn O'Halloran
Political Control Versus Expertise: Congressional Choices about Administrative Procedures
Kathleen Bawn