What's this course about?

Although the Constitution provides for three branches, the legislative branch is the "First Branch"—the center of lawmaking authority. Regardless of an idea's source, it is Congress that shapes policy proposals into actual laws. The ultimate responsibility for the content and scope of American lawmaking and public policy rests with Congress.

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an introduction to Congressional politics. We will cover numerous topics as they relate to the U.S. Congress: legislative development, representation, Congressional elections, Congressional committees, party leadership and organization, legislative voting decisions, and the lawmaking and policy process. We will cover some classics of Congressional research, even as we use readings, assignments, and class discussion to bring a contemporary perspective to long-standing theories of Congressional behavior.

With that in mind, these are our goals this semester:
To obtain a general working knowledge of the U.S. Congress, and where possible other legislative bodies;
To apply the academic literature on Congress to current Congressional politics;
To stimulate thinking and discussion about the role and effectiveness of Congress in particular and representative democracy in general;
And to provide you with new perspective that will shape your future attempts to critically evaluate Congress and its members.

What is the workload?

The university catalog defines an A as "excellent," B as "good," C as "satisfactory," and so on (see here). Elsewhere, the catalog contains this interesting policy (here):

"The expectation for undergraduate courses is three hours of work per week per credit hour for the average student who is appropriately prepared; much more time may be required to achieve excellence."

Think that through for a moment. "Three hours of work per week per credit hour" comes out to **18 hours per week** in PlSc 315 (since we are moving at double speed in only half a semester). If you are an "average student" who wants an average grade (roughly a B), plan to spend about 18 hours on this class, on average, each week. In the political science department, "average" means B. If you want to achieve "excellence," the university's definition of an A, then "much more time may be required."

Punchline: Expect to be very busy once we get going. Ensure that your other courses, job, family, and church responsibilities leave you plenty of time for this class.

Grades and assignments

I use a variety of assessment methods to keep final grades as fair as possible, including closed-form questions (e.g. multiple choice, true/false), short answer questions, and essays. You may see all these question types on exams. You will also write a substantial term paper outside of class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film paper</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final paper (and assignments 1-6; details below)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique of a classmate's final paper (Asst 7)</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam (partly comprehensive)</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Late assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Any paper turned in on the due date but after the beginning of class gets a 5% penalty. One weekday late is a 10% penalty; two weekdays late is a 25% penalty; later is unacceptable. Papers must be turned in hard copy, not by email.

Final paper. The major assignment for this course is a 10-15 page paper containing a detailed analysis of a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Throughout the semester, you will complete several smaller assignments leading up to the final product. With the exception of assignment 7, these preparatory assignments will not receive separate grades. Instead, your work on these assignments will be reflected in your overall term paper grade. Note, though, that failure to complete a preparatory assignment satisfactorily will result in a 10% penalty on the final paper (so if you skip three of the assignments, your paper starts off...
with a 30% penalty). Also, if you turn one of these assignments in late, the penalty for that particular assignment will be calculated as a percentage of this 10% penalty. Further details about the assignments and paper are available online.

**Missed exams**: No makeups unless you (1) arrange it in advance for a valid reason or (2) have a genuine emergency and contact me as soon as possible to work things out.

**Attendance**: You will do poorly on the exams if you do not attend every lecture. If you must miss a lecture, get notes from another student and then visit me in my office to discuss them.

**Final exam**: The final exam will be in the testing center throughout finals week.

**What books do we need to buy?**

We will use several books. If you buy them all new at the bookstore, expect to spend around $150-170. If you buy them all used on Amazon, you might spend $40 or less.

**Buying older editions to save money**: With most books listed below, you will be okay with a previous edition, but don't go more than one edition back (i.e. if I assign the 3rd, you can probably buy the 2nd, but don't buy the 1st.). Still, there is no question that you are best off with the most recent edition. It is possible (but unlikely) that buying an older edition will cost you to miss a question or two on the exams. If you choose to buy an older edition, be aware that you are taking that risk.

- **Required**: David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection*.
  - The BYU bookstore has the 2nd edition (from 2004), also available at Amazon ($10-15).
  - The original 1974 edition is identical to the 2004 edition other than the preface. Either version is perfectly acceptable. The **1974 edition is at Amazon ($1-5)**.
  - There is a copy on reserve at the library. Ask for call number JK 1067 .M3
  - The BYU bookstore has the 2nd edition (from 2003), also available at Amazon ($20-50).
  - The original 1978 edition is identical to the 2003 edition other than the preface. Either version is perfectly acceptable. The **1978 version is at Amazon ($3-10)**.
  - There is a copy on reserve at the library. Ask for call number JK 1323 1978 .F46
- **Required**: Loomis and Schiller, *The Contemporary Congress*, 5th edition. You can probably get by with a recent previous edition, but the page numbers will be different.
  - BYU bookstore. Amazon: $10-25 used.
  - BYU bookstore. Amazon: $5-15 used. The book has a website with additional materials.
- **Required**: Barbara Sinclair, *Unorthodox Lawmaking: New Lawmaking Processes in the U. S. Congress*, 3rd ed. You can probably get by with a recent previous edition, but the page numbers will be different.
  - BYU bookstore. Amazon: $5-15 used

**Reading schedule**

Dates may change, of course. You can also view the reading schedule in calendar format.

Although my lectures may diverge considerably from the readings—more so for some topics than for others—be advised that anything from lecture or the readings is fair game for the exams.
- Readings (100 pages):
  - Fenno's book, first third of book or more [100 pages]
- FYI:
  - Attendance is required today unless you are currently in the Utah legislature internship program. We will meet for only 30-50 minutes.
  - Over the next two weeks, you will read Fenno's and Mayhew's books on your own. As you do so, ask yourself: Does Mayhew's theory seem more plausible than Fenno's (or vice versa)? In what ways do the two books agree, and in what ways do they disagree? According to Mayhew, what do members of Congress want? Does Fenno agree? What does each author's theory suggest about the value of Congress as an institution—does Congress work, or is it somehow flawed?
  - Take thorough notes on these books. You will need to cite them heavily in papers you turn in later. That's how I will know that you read them carefully.

Wed, Feb 29th, 2012. No class today (read Fenno).
- Readings (100 pages):
  - Fenno's book, second third of book or more [100 pages]

Fri, Mar 2nd, 2012. No class today (finish Fenno).
- DUE:
  - Finish Fenno's book
  - Watch a film (see film paper instructions). The paper is not due just yet, but start watching the films now.
- Readings (100 pages):
  - Fenno's book, remainder of book [100 pages]
  - Start Mayhew's book

Mon, Mar 5th, 2012. Member goals. What behaviors does the reelection incentive lead to? Does Mayhew's book show that our Constitutional structure is flawed? How does Fenno's theory differ from Mayhew's?
- Terms: Hierarchy of needs; reelection incentive; power within the House; median voter theorem; advertising; credit claiming; position taking; protectionist phase; expansionist phase
- Readings (80 pages):
  - Mayhew, pages 1-77 [77 pages]
  - "Media darling Jason Chaffetz is 'having the time of my life' as a member of Congress" (or as PDF) [3 pages]
  - Be prepared to discuss Fenno, especially ch 5
- Resources: Show resources
- FYI: Current Utah legislative interns heard a version of this lecture last January in PlSc 297; the rest of you need to attend today.

- DUE: Finish Mayhew's book
- Readings (99 pages):
  - Mayhew, pp 81-180 [99 pages]
Unit 2: Congress—The Basics

Fri, Mar 9th, 2012. Congress in the Constitution. Why don't we like Congress? Why did the founders design Congress the way they did?

- **DUE:** Watch another film (see film paper instructions).
- Terms: Congress vs most members of Congress vs your member of Congress; tyranny vs efficiency tradeoff; 17th amendment
- Readings (5 pages):
  - Read this entire syllabus before coming to class
  - The Constitution, Article I (online) [5 pages]
  - You should have already read 100% of Fenno's and Mayhew's books by now. If you haven't, finish pronto.
- FYI: Now that the Utah legislative session is over, everybody should attend from here out. Prepare to get busy.

Mon, Mar 12th, 2012. Legislative development. How/why do the internal institutions of Congress change over time? What role do norms play?

- **DUE:**
  - Assignment 1 (see term paper instructions)
  - Assignment 2 (see term paper instructions)
- Terms: Institutionalization; well-bounded; internal complexity; universalism; centralization/decentralization of power; norms; sociological learning vs rational apprenticeship
- Readings (57 pages):
  - Loomis and Schiller, chs 2-3 [54 pages]
  - Deseret News (2009), "Hatch, Kennedy made political theater as 'odd couple!" (or as PDF) [3 pages]
- Resources: Show resources


- Readings (none):
  - Read all of Fenno's book
  - Read all of Mayhew's book
  - Watch two films (see film paper instructions)
- FYI: You should have read these books and watched these films by now. I recognize that many of you are behind because of the internship. This is tentatively scheduled as your catchup day, although I may reschedule it if needs change.


- **DUE:** Assignment 3 (see term paper instructions)
- Terms: Geographic constituency; reelection constituency; primary constituency; personal constituency (intimates); issue representation ("substantive" representation); service representation; allocational representation; descriptive representation; delegate vs trustee
- Readings (17 pages):
  - Loomis and Schiller, ch 1 [12 pages]
  - Politico (2009), "Women Lawmakers Best Men" (or as PDF) [3 pages]
  - Sen. Robert Byrd (read about him) once gave us an excellent example of home style; view it here [2:45]
  - Ansolabehere and Jones (2010), "Constituents' Responses to Congressional Roll-Call Voting." I'll spare you from reading the article; just read this summary [2 pages].
FYI:

- The "member goals" lecture and today's "representation" lecture both draw heavily on Fenno's and Mayhew's books, the two most important things you will read in this course. If for some reason you haven't read both books yet, do so. They will be covered heavily in the exams; you will also need to be able to discuss them in your term paper.
- Note to legislative interns: While you were gone, I lectured to the non-interns on member goals. You heard a very similar lecture (the same one, actually) in PlSc 297 in the "What legislators want" lecture. Review your notes from 297, as this material will be on the 315 exam. Visit with me if you have questions. That lecture drew heavily on Mayhew.

Unit 3: Congressional Elections

Mon, Mar 19th, 2012. Reapportionment and redistricting. What method do we use to apportion House seats, and why? What values influence redistricting, and when do these values conflict? How do redistricting committees and legislators have competing interests?
- Terms: Apportionment vs districting; Alabama paradox; Method of equal proportions (Huntington-Hill method); Texas redistricting controversy
- Readings (33 pages):
  - Play the game at [http://redistrictinggame.org/](http://redistrictinggame.org/). No, really. At a minimum, try the "basic" version of missions 1, 2, 3, and 4. Mission 5 is optional.
  - Poke around at [RedistrictingTheNation.com](http://www.redistrictingthenation.com)
- FYI: I strongly suggest that you bring a complete draft of your film paper to the FHSS writing lab no later than today. Not required, but wise.

- DUE: Film paper (see [film paper instructions](http://adambrown.info/p/courses/2012/winter/315?show=term_paper_instructions))
- Terms: Ambition (discrete, static, progressive); types of amateur vs professional; strategic entry calculus; opportunity costs of running
- Readings (91 pages):
  - Loomis and Schiller, ch 4 [25 pages]
  - Herrnson, chs 1-2 [64 pages]
  - AP (2010), "3 Democrats—2 senators, 1 governor—to retire" (or as [PDF](http://adambrown.info/p/courses/2012/winter/315?show=term_paper_instructions)) [2 pages]
- Resources: [Show resources](http://adambrown.info/p/courses/2012/winter/315?show=resources)

- DUE: Assignment 4 (see [term paper instructions](http://adambrown.info/p/courses/2012/winter/315?show=term_paper_instructions))
- Terms: Campaign finance; FECA; Buckley v Valeo; BCRA; soft money; hard money; PAC; 527; issue advocacy; electioneering communication
- Readings (113 pages):
  - Herrnson, chs 5-6 and 10-11 [103 pages]
  - NY Times (2010), "Justices overturn key campaign limits" (or as [PDF](http://adambrown.info/p/courses/2012/winter/315?show=term_paper_instructions)) [3 pages]

- **DUE:** Assignment 5 (see term paper instructions)
- Terms: Recall vs recognition; rolloff; coattail; incumbent; challenger; open seat; incumbency advantage; frank; Chaffetz; Hyer; Hatch; Lee
- Readings (135 pages):
  - Herrnson, chs 3-4 and 7-9 [135 pages]

Wed, Mar 28th, 2012. Woohoo!

- **DUE:** Midterm (in testing center; no class)
- FYI: The midterm will be in the testing center two days only, March 28-29 (Monday and Tuesday).

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Unit 4: Organization. Who Runs This Place?

Fri, Mar 30th, 2012. Part 1: Congressional committees. Why do we have committees? When are committees most autonomous? What powers do committees have (negative, positive)? What are the limits on these powers? Which committees are most powerful? Part 2: Parties and leadership. If committees are really autonomous, what four things would you expect to observe? What evidence is there that party leaders are more powerful than committees? What makes some leaders more powerful than others?

- Terms: Committee; floor; chamber; committee-dominant model; party-dominant model; informational (chamber-dominant) model; standing committee; joint committee; select committee; conference committee; negative power vs positive power; discharge petition; multiple referral; reciprocity; unrepresentativeness; preference outliers; seniority; continuity; self-selection; specialization; conditional party government; coolies; cartel theory; the Johnson treatment
- Readings (54 pages):
  - Loomis and Schiller, chs 5 and 8 [43 pages]
  - Green (2010), Assessing Pelosi (several parts): intro, part 1, part 2 (Pelosi and health care), part 3 (origins of Pelosi's power), part 4 (Pelosi's future). If the links don't work, download PDF versions here. [11 pages]
  - Review Mayhew pp 81-180
- Resources: Show resources

Mon, Apr 2nd, 2012. Part 1: Parties and leadership continued. Part 2: Rules and procedures. Why do rules matter? How do structural (Constitutional) differences between the Senate and House influence the types of procedures that each chamber adopts? What role does the Rules committee play in the House? Given that it has no Rules committee, how does the Senate control floor time?

- **DUE:** Assignment 6 (see term paper instructions)
- Terms: Arrow's paradox; transitivity; Powell amendment; Rules committee; open rule, closed rule, etc.;
unanimous consent agreement; filibuster; cloture

Readings (109 pages):
- Loomis and Schiller, ch 7 [15 pages]
- Sinclair, chs 1-4 [90 pages]
- "Senate parliamentarian stands to become central figure in a health care vote" (or as PDF) [3 pages]
- KCPW/NPR (2011), Amendment to gun bill squeaks through [Utah] House [1 page]

Unit 5: The Legislative Process

Wed, Apr 4th, 2012. Voting decisions. What kind of information do members of Congress like best? What sources do they look to the most? How important is content relative to source? Why do members of Congress sometimes ignore district opinion? What incentives do members of Congress have to vote sincerely or strategically?
- Terms: Brevity; political relevance; evaluative; gatekeepers; "revolving door"; intensity; Powell amendment; strategic voting; sincere voting
- Readings (4 pages):
  - Very few readings; finish up your term paper.
  - "Relationships, expertise, and the revolving door" [2 pages]
  - McCarty et al (2010), "The price of principle" (or as PDF) [2 pages]
- Resources: Show resources
- FYI: I assigned very few readings today to ensure plenty of time to write your paper. Write early so that you have time to visit me if you have questions.

- DUE: Term paper (for review). Bring a complete copy of your paper. It should be final draft quality. You will exchange with another student for peer reviews.
- Terms: Delegate vs trustee (Burke); crafted talk; pandering; false consensus; democratic ideals; democratic practice
- Readings (28 pages):
  - Hibbing and Theiss-Morse. 1996. "Civics is Not Enough: Teaching Barbarics in K-12" [6 pages]
  - AP via Yahoo (Nov 2009), "Legislation inflation grips GOP" [2 pages]
- Resources: Show resources

Mon, Apr 9th, 2012. Interbranch conflict. What are the president's formal and informal legislative powers? What sorts of authority does Congress delegate to the executive branch? Why? What tools do members of Congress have at their disposal to ensure that delegated authority is not abused?
- DUE: Assignment 7 (see term paper instructions). Bring two copies of your review—one for me to grade, and one for the student whose paper you reviewed.
- Terms: Bully pulpit; veto; signing statement; bureaucracy; police patrol; fire alarm; the Federal Register; oversight
- Readings (67 pages):
  - Loomis and Schiller, ch 6 [15 pages]
  - Sinclair, chs 5-6 [47 pages]

- **DUE:** Term paper (final draft; see term paper instructions)
- Terms: distributive; regulatory; redistributive; iron triangle; earmark
- Readings (58 pages):
  - Sinclair, ch 12 [20 pages]
  - Loomis and Schiller, ch 10 [20 pages]
  - Davidson @ Deseret News (2009), "Chaffetz may end full earmark ban" (or as PDF) [2 pages]
  - Davidson @ Deseret News (2009), "Chaffetz ends personal ban on earmarks" (or as PDF) [1 page]
  - SLT editorial (2009), "Kosher pork: Chaffetz sets his own earmark rules" [1 page]
  - NY Times (2010), "House leaders bar earmarks to for-profit companies" [2 pages]
  - Salt Lake Tribune (2011), "Utah cities scale back D.C. lobbying" (or as PDF) [2 pages]
  - Washington Post (Aug 2011), "Origins of the debt showdown" (or as PDF) [10 pages]
- Resources: Show resources

**Final exam:** The final will be in the testing center throughout finals week.

**Notices**

The following are notices from the political science department.

**Plagiarism:** While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty at the Honor Code site can be found by moving your mouse over "Honor Code" in the second grey bar and then move down then right and click on "Other Clarifications", then move your mouse down and click on "Academic Honesty."

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

**Discrimination:** Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

**Disabilities:** Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB

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