

Legislative Politics

Fall 2013

This class is a graduate-level, take no prisoners survey of the contemporary literature on the U. S. Congress. It gives a broad overview of research trajectories, critical questions, and important findings in the congressional studies. It is a first step – but only a first step – in preparing for an American field exam or beginning a research career that focuses on legislative politics.

I do not teach this class as a seminar in applied rational choice theory or as a debate between alternate theoretic approaches. Rather, the focus is on empirical implications and testable hypotheses. Rather than debating the validity or aesthetics of assumptions and approaches, we will focus on what a piece of research tells us about how Congress (and legislatures in general) works. My yardstick is simple: a theory or hypothesis is good if it helps us learn something about congressional politics that we didn't already know, and is not worth spending time on otherwise.

As the syllabus makes clear, I have skewed the readings in favor of recent research, neglecting many classic pieces that anyone interested in legislative politics really needs to know. I will distribute lists of additional important and classic readings at the beginning of each class session, and will discuss how the assigned readings fit into the larger research stream.

Class assignments are simple. This is a discussion class, not a lecture course, and I expect everyone to be full participants, regardless of their principle field or standing in the program. I will distribute a list of general questions before each class that are intended to frame but not limit discussion. You are responsible for doing the assigned readings, and coming to class prepared to be a meaningful participant in the discussion of the readings in light of the questions. I take the last requirement seriously – saying “nothing made sense” or “no comment” is not a satisfactory response. If you can't make head or tail of a piece of research, you must come to class with a good sense of where your uncertainties lie.

In addition to the weekly assignments, you will be responsible for three pieces of written work:

- Two ten-page literature reviews, intended to be written responses of the questions posed each week,
- A ten-page research design, on a topic of your choice that builds on, critiques, or extends one or more of the works read in the class. The proposal needs to include a brief set-up, description of a hypothesis or critical test, an

operationalization of the hypothesis or test, and a description of the data needed to test the hypothesis. Extra credit will be given to actual data analysis. The paper will be revised based on class comments and presented during the latter part of the class.

The due dates for these assignments (for the research design, the draft) are scheduled after breaks in the class in mid-September and mid-October. As a partial make-up for the missed sessions, we will have class on the Monday before Thanksgiving.

Course Syllabus

8/26 Introduction

Sinclair, Barbara. 2012. "The New World of U. S. Senators." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

Dodd, Lawrence C. and Bruce Oppenheimer. 2012. "The House in a Time of Crisis: Economic Turmoil and Partisan Upheaval." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

Polsby, Nelson, and Eric Schickler. 2002. "Landmarks in the Study of Congress Since 1945." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 5:333-367.

9/2 Congressional Elections

Erikson, Robert S. and Gerald Wright. 2012. "Voters, Candidates, and Issues in Congressional Elections." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

Carson, Jamie L., Erik J. Engstrom, and Jason M. Roberts. 2007. "Candidate Quality, the Personal Vote, and the Incumbency Advantage in Congress." *American Political Science Review*, 101: 289-301

Druckman, James, Martin J. Kifer, and Michael Parkin. 2009. "Campaign Communications in U.S. Congressional Elections." *American Political Science Review* 103: 343 - 66

Stone, Walter J. and Elizabeth N. Simas. 2010. "Candidate Valence and Ideological Positions in U.S. House Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 54: 371-388.

9/9 No Class

9/16 Electoral Connection (First Review Paper due on 9/13)

Canes-Wrone, Brandice, William Minozzi, and Jessica Bonney Reveley. 2011. "Issue Accountability and the Mass Public." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36: 5–35

Wilkins, Arjun. 2012. "Electoral Security of Members of the U.S. House, 1900–2006." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 37: 277–304

Parker, David C.W., and Craig Goodman. 2010. "Making a Good Impression: Resource Allocation, Home Styles, and Washington Work." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34: 493–524

Grimmer, Justin. 2013. "Appropriators not Position Takers: The Distorting Effects of Electoral Incentives on Congressional Representation." *American Journal of Political Science* 57: 624–42.

9/23 Legislative Institutions

Roberts, Jason M. 2010. "The Development of Special Orders and Special Rules in the U.S. House, 1881–1937." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 35: 307–36

Finocchiaro, Charles and David W. Rohde. 2008. "War for the Floor: Partisan Theory and Agenda Control in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 33: 35–49

Pearson, Kathryn, and Eric Schickler. 2009. "Discharge Petitions, Agenda Control, and the Congressional Committee System, 1929–76." *The Journal of Politics*, 71:1238–1256

Jenkins, Jeffrey A. and Nathan W. Monroe. 2012. "Buying Negative Agenda Control in the U.S. House." *American Journal of Political Science* 56: 897–912.

9/30 Committees

Esterling, Kevin. 2007. "Buying Expertise: Campaign Contributions and Attention to Policy Analysis in Congressional Committees." *American Political Science Review* 101: 93 - 109

Adler, E. Scott and John D. Wilkerson. 2008. "Intended Consequences: Jurisdictional Reform and Issue Control in the U.S. House of Representatives." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 33: 85-105

Hedlund, Roland D. Kevin Coombs, Nancy Martorano, and Keith E. Hamm. 2009. "Partisan Stacking on Legislative Committees." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 34: 175-91.

Aldrich, John H., Brittany N. Perry, and David Rohde. 2012. "Richard Fenno's Theory of Congressional Committees and the Polarization of the House." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

10/7 Party Organization and Influence

Smith, Steven S. and Gerald Gamm. 2012. "The Dynamics of Party Government in Congress." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

Carrol, Royce, Gary Cox, and Monica Parson. 2006. "How Parties Create Electoral Democracy, Chapter 2." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 31: 71-104

Gary W. Cox, Gary W. Thad Kousser and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2010. "Party Power or Preferences? Quasi-Experimental Evidence from American State Legislatures." *The Journal of Politics*, 72: 799-811

Lebo, Matthew J., Adam J. McGlynn and Gregory Koger. 2007. "Strategic Party Government: Party Influence in Congress, 1789-2000, *AJPS*

10/14 and 10/21 No Class

10/28 Floor Proceedings and Agenda Control (Second Review Paper Due; First Draft of Research Design Due)

Koger, Gregory. 2012. "Filibustering and Parties in the Modern Senate." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

Smith, Steven S., Ian Ostrander, and Christopher M. Pope. 2012. "Majority Party Power and Procedural Motions in the U. S. Senate." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 38: 205-36.

Pope, Jeremy and Shawn Trier. 2011. "Reconsidering the Great Compromise at the Federal Convention of 1787: Deliberation and Agenda Effects on the Senate and Slavery." *American Journal of Political Science* 55: 289-306.

Jenkins, Jeffrey A. and Nathan Monroe. 2013. "On Measuring Legislative Agenda Setting Power." Unpublished paper.

11/4 Measuring Votes and Preferences

Krehbiel, Keith and Zachary Preskowicz. 2012. "Legislative Organization and Ideal-Point Bias," unpublished paper

Carrubba, Clifford, Matthew Gabel, and Simon Hug. 2008. "Legislative Voting Behavior, Seen and Unseen: A Theory of Roll-Call Vote Selection." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 33: 543-56

Shor, B., C. Berry, and N. McCarty. 2010. "A Bridge to Somewhere: Mapping State and Congressional Ideology on a Cross-Institutional Common Space." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 35:417-48.

Shor, Boris, and Nolan McCarthy. 2011. "The Ideological Mapping of American Legislatures." *American Political Science Review*. 105: 530-51.

11/11 Vote Decisions

Finocchiaro, Charles J. and Jeffrey A. Jenkins. 2008. "In Search of Killer Amendments in the Modern U.S. House." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 33: 263-284

Jeong, Gyung-Ho, Gary J. Miller, and Itai Sened. 2009. "Closing the Deal: Negotiating Civil Rights Legislation." *American Political Science Review*, 103: 588-606

Clinton, Joshua, and John Lapinski. 2008. "Laws and Roll Calls in the U.S. Congress, 1891-1994." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 33: 511-27.

Carson, Jamie L., Gregory Koger, Matthew J. Lebo and Everett Young. 2011. "The Electoral Costs of Party Loyalty in Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 54: 598-616.

11/18 Bicameralism and Separation of Powers

Vander Wielen, Ryan. 2010. "The Influence of Conference Committees on Policy Outcomes." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 35: 487-518

Binder, Sarah A. and Forrest Maltzman. 2012. "Advice and Consent: The Politics of Confirming Federal Judges." in *Congress Reconsidered (10th Edition)*, Lawrence Dodd and Bruce Oppenheimer, eds, Washington: CQ Press.

Sin, Gilesa, and Arthur Lupia. 2012. "How The Senate and The President Affect the Timing of Power-Sharing Rules Changes in the U. S. house." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organizations*. 29: 1-33.

Shepsle, Kenneth A., Robert Van Houweling, Samuel Abrams, and Peter Hanson. 2009. "The Senate Electoral Cycle and Bicameral Appropriations Politics." *American Journal of Political Science* 53: 343-59.

11/25 Bureaucracy (Research Proposals Due) – note Monday of Thanksgiving Week

Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan and Matthew Stephenson. 2007, "Regulatory Quality under Imperfect Insight" *American Political Science Review*, 101:605-620

Clinton, Joshua C., Anthony Bertelli, Christian R. Grose, David E. Lewis and David C. Nixon. 2012. "Separated Powers in the United States: The Ideology of Agencies, Presidents, and Congress." *American Journal of Political Science* 56: 341–354,

McDonald, Jason A. 2010. "Limitation Riders and Congressional Influence over Bureaucratic Policy Decisions." *American Political Science Review* 104: 766-82.

Moe, Terry. 2012. "Delegation, Control, and the Study of Public Bureaucracy." *The Forum* 10: 1-42.

12/2 and 12/9 - Class Presentations