

Political Science 225  
Congress and the Presidency  
Fall 2012

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**Office Hours: M, W and F 10:00 to 11:00 and by appointment**

## **Course Objectives**

This course seeks to address these concerns through the following objectives:

- Students will understand the constitutional foundations of the Congress and the President.
- Students will understand the basic ways in which Congress organizes its work to perform its basic functions of representation and legislating.
- Students will understand the role of partisanship and interest group activity on the outcome of the congressional process.
- Students will understand the theories of presidential power and how exercise of that power has impacted democracy in America.
- Students will understand how the presidency is organized to address presidential roles regarding legislative leadership, foreign policy, war and national emergencies.
- Students will write a research paper that will require them to practice writing as a process including the process of formal revisions.

## **Required Books**

Bob Benenson, **Winning in 2012**, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2012)

John Haskell, **Congress in Context**, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2010)

Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein, **The Broken Branch**, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006)

Joseph Pika and John Anthony Maltese, **The Politics of the Presidency**, 8<sup>th</sup> edition, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2012)

## **Attendance**

Students are required to attend all classes. Attendance will be part of the instructor evaluation grade. Students missing class for legitimate reasons can be excused but the instructor reserves the right to judge the legitimacy of the excuse.

## **Learning Disability accommodations**

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main

Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

## **Evaluation of Student's Performance**

The student's final grade will be based on a 300 point system.

Reading Questions	100 points
Research paper process	20 points
Research paper draft	40 points
Final research paper	60 points
Memorandum	60 points
Instructor evaluation	20 points

## **Reading Questions**

An essential element of good writing is to read well. In that context, the class will write answers to questions on ten reading assignments during the course. The questions can be found at the end of the syllabus. The answers to the questions will be found directly in the relevant reading.

The answers shall be submitted electronically before the class for which the readings are due. The answers should be type written and double spaced. The length of each answer will normally vary from one good paragraph to three. Additional paragraphs might occasionally be warranted. Students can include in their answers any observations that the student chooses to make that represents an effort to reflect on how the subject matter within the reading relates to the principal themes of the course.

Student answers will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- The accuracy and validity of the written answers.
- The clarity with which the answers are written.
- The quality of any reflections or insight offered by the student.

Each set of answers will be worth a possible 10 points.

## **Election Report**

Each student will do a research report on the 2012 national elections. The reports will answer the following questions:

1. What was the outcome of the presidential and congressional election?
2. What conditions (political, economic, social) most significantly shaped the outcome?
3. What are the most significant implications of the outcome?

This report is a research report that requires students to use resources not assigned in class and follow the writing as a process format for completion of the assignment. The final draft of the

paper will be worth up to 100 points. Completion of the steps in the writing process will be worth up to 40 points. These steps and the deadlines for their completion are as follows:

**Annotated bibliography (10 points):** Students will provide bibliographic information on sources used for the paper and one or two paragraphs summarizing the content of the source and describing why the source appears to be useful. At least ten sources must be provided, three of which can be assigned course readings.

**Thesis statement and outline (10 points):** This requires a clear statement of the principal thesis of the paper and a good topic outline for the entire paper. The quality of the outline will be judged on how easy it would be for the writer to construct the paper with only the outline in front of him or her. Single page outlines will be ineligible for full credit.

**Preliminary draft (40 points):** The preliminary draft will be a complete draft of the paper that will be submitted for review by the instructor with instructions for revision.

**Final draft (60 points)**

## **Memorandum**

As the final assignment for the course, each student will assume the role of a veteran member of the President's legislative liaison staff who has been given the task of preparing a memorandum for new legislative staffers at the White House. The memorandum is intended to identify and communicate the most important elements of the congressional process and the President's role in it for the new staff members in regard to one of the following areas:

1. The authorization of climate change legislation proposed by the President.
2. The preparation of the 2014 federal budget.
3. The determination of whether or not the President will use military force to influence Iranian policy regarding the development of nuclear weapons.

After choosing one of the three topics as a point of focus, students should review the relevant constitutional authority for the President and for Congress, the key steps in the legislative process where the President might intervene either formally or informally and identify the most essential political considerations that might shape the President's behavior in regard to the goal at hand.

## **Instructor Evaluation**

Each student will be evaluated by the instructor for his or her participation, involvement in and contributions to the course. This portion of the grade will reflect all activities in the course that are not otherwise specified in the syllabus including attendance, submitting assignments on time and participation in class discussion.

## Course Topics and Reading Assignments

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class topic</b>
8/28	Introduction
8/30	Constitutional and functional position of the President <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, Ch. 1
9/4	Constitutional and functional position of the Congress <b>Read:</b> Mann and Ornstein, Ch. 2; Haskell, Ch. 1
9/6	Representation vs. Deliberation/job of the congressperson <b>Read:</b> Haskell, Ch. 2
9/11	Elections <b>Read:</b> Haskell, Ch. 3 or Pika and Maltese, Ch. 2 – specific assignments will be made in class.
9/18	The 2012 election <b>Read:</b> Benenson, <b>entire</b>
9/20	Presidential leadership and character <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, Ch. 4
9/25	The Public Presidency and the permanent campaign <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, Ch. 3
9/27	The Authorization Process <b>Read:</b> Haskell, pp. 129-157
10/2	The Authorization Process <b>Read:</b> Haskell, pp. 157-191
10/4	The president in the legislative process <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, Ch. 5
10/11	The Budget process and economic policy <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, Ch. 9
10/16	The Budget process and economic policy <b>Read:</b> Haskell, Ch. 5
10/18	Congressional oversight <b>Read:</b> Haskell, Ch. 6

10/23	Parties in Congress
10/25	Rise of partisanship <b>Read:</b> Mann and Ornstein, Ch. 3 and 4
10/30	Contemporary partisan politics <b>Read:</b> Mann and Ornstein, Ch. 5, 6 and 7
11/1	President as Chief Executive <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, pp. 250-274
11/6	President as Chief Executive <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, pp. 274-294
11/8	Presidential leadership in foreign policy <b>Read:</b> Pika and Maltese, Ch. 10
11/13	The election of 2012
11/15	Presidential leadership in foreign policy
11/20	The war powers <b>Read:</b> Haskell, Ch. 7
11/27	The war powers and abuses of executive power Readings to be distributed in class
11/29	Reform and revitalization <b>Read:</b> Haskell, Ch. 8; Mann and Ornstein, "Conclusion"
12/4	To be announced
12/6	Closing

## Reading Questions

8/30 Pika and Maltese, Chapter 1

1. What do Pika and Maltese mean when referring to "inventing the president?"
2. What is the difference among the constitutional, stewardship and prerogative theories of presidential power?
3. What is the theory of the unitary executive?
4. What are the main factors in the expansion of the presidency?

9/6 Haskell, Chapter 2

1. How might the competing demands of deliberation and representation be manifest in the organization of Congress by committee and by party?
2. Why are individual members of Congress evaluated more positively by public opinion than is the overall institution?
3. What are the key elements of the relationship between interest groups and members of Congress?
4. List four differences between the House and the Senate.

9/18 Benenson, all

1. Identify three things that Benenson suggests favor President Obama in the 2012 election?
2. Identify three things that Benenson suggests favor former Governor Romney in the 2012 election?
3. What is the basic overview of the partisan division within -the Electoral College as the 2012 campaign begins?
4. According to Benenson, what is the outlook for the 2012 congressional elections (includes the Senate)?

9/25 Pika and Maltese, Chapter 3

1. What does it mean that presidential leadership has come to rely on “going public?”
2. What are the symbolic dimensions of the Presidency? Why do they matter?
3. What do Pika and Maltese mean when they discuss targeted communications?
4. What is the relationship between the President and the media?
5. How does the President manage the relationship between the media and the Presidency?

10/2 Haskell, pp. 157-191

1. What is *the rule of 218 and 60*?
2. What has been the historical trend in the distribution of power between committee chairs and party leaders in Congress?
3. What is the Rules Committee and why is it important?
4. What is a “unanimous consent agreement” in the Senate and why is it necessary?
5. What is a conference committee?

10/11 Pika and Maltese, Chapter 9

1. What are the principal approaches to macroeconomic policy?
2. What role does the President have in setting macroeconomic policy?
3. What role has the president played in microeconomic policy?
4. What is the economic subpresidency and what are its major institutional components?

10/18 Haskell, Chapter 6

1. What are the principal purposes of congressional oversight of the executive?
2. What are the principal means by which Congress conducts oversight of the executive branch?

3. Explain why Haskell indicates that committee oversight hearings are intended to serve the agenda of the chair and his or her party?
4. What is a “legislative veto?”

10/25 Mann and Ornstein, Chapters 3 and 4

1. What were the major reforms in the House of Representatives between 1969 and 1976?
2. What role did Newt Gingrich play in changing the House of Representatives?
3. Identify three “scandals” or major confrontations that escalated partisan conflict during the 1980 and 1990s?
4. What is the “Contract with America” and why was it significant?
5. What was President Bush’s approach towards the partisan divisions in Congress? Provide and example.

11/1 Pika and Maltese, pp. 250-274

1. Pika and Maltese identify 5 general factors that contribute to bureaucratic power and shape presidential-bureaucratic relations. Identify and explain each of the five factors.

11/8 Pika and Maltese, Chapter 10

1. What are the President’s primary powers in regard to foreign policy leadership?
2. What was the Iran-Contra affair?
3. What was the “pre-emption doctrine” as articulated by the Bush administration?
4. Pika and Maltese identify four styles for organizing and managing national security policy making. What are they?

11/20 Haskell, Chapter 7

1. What are the primary elements of Congressional authority regarding the war powers?
2. What are the primary elements of Presidential authority regarding the war powers?
3. Why is it said that the President has the advantage in the struggle over control of the war powers?
4. When there is full time for debate, should Congress or the President have the right to decide whether or not to commit troops to battle?

11/27 To be determined