

**POL 314: Legislative Politics**  
**Spring 2010**  
**SRC 105**

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Office Hours: T 3-5 p.m. & by appointment

**Course Content**

This class provides a systematic study of the modern Congress. In the process, we shall study the basic elements of legislative structure and behavior—elections, individual members, committees, parties—while noting the differences between the House and Senate.

**Required Texts**

A collection of readings is available on the course Blackboard page. You MUST bring the appropriate readings for each section to class with you. In addition, we will read *Party Wars* by Barbara Sinclair.

**Grading**

Students are required to read all assigned readings, attend all lectures, take two exams, and complete a research paper. The grade breakdown is:

Class Participation:	10%
Midterm:	20%
Writing assignment:	40%
Final:	30%

Students will have the choice of writing papers solo or in teams of two.

**Students are expected to do their own work. Students must cite sources used to write their papers.** All work submitted in this class must be original work and cannot be submitted to more than one class. This policy is required to encourage consistent ethical behavior among students and to foster a climate of fair competition. Consequently, the Undergraduate Student Honor Code in is force at all times. Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and upholding the Honor Code which is available from the Office of the Dean of Students.

Turn your cell phones and pagers off. Show up on time and don't leave early. Participate in class discussions. Make-up exams are allowed in the event of illness or death in the family with documentation. There are no excuses for late papers; start papers early and protect yourself against computer failures.

**Facebook:** for both our sakes, I do not "friend" undergraduate students.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topics and Readings</b>
Jan. 19, 21	<b>Introduction. Constitution &amp; Congress.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federalist Papers 57, 58, 62, 63</li> </ul>
Jan. 26, 28	<b>Reapportionment, Redistricting, &amp; Electoral Rules</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canon, "Electoral Systems and the Representation of Minority Interests in Legislatures" LSQ 1999</li> <li>• Masket, "It Takes An Outsider" AJPS 2007</li> </ul>
Feb. 2, 4	<b>Ambition &amp; Incumbency</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fox &amp; Lawless, "To Run or Not to Run for Office," AJPS 2005</li> <li>• Erikson &amp; Wright, "Voters, Candidates, and Issues in Congressional Elections," CR8 2005 77-106</li> </ul>
Feb. 9, 11	<b>Campaigns and Elections</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jacobson 2009, "Ch. 4: Congressional Campaigns"</li> <li>• Carson, Koger, Lebo, and Young "The Electoral Consequences of Party Loyalty in Congress."</li> </ul>
Feb. 16, 18	<b>Election Outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jacobson 2009 "Ch6: National Politics and Congressional Elections"</li> </ul>
Feb. 23, 25	Review (2/23) and Midterm (2/25)
Mar. 2, 4	<b>Members of Congress</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CRS, "Sources of Legislative Proposals" 2005</li> <li>• Koger, "Position-Taking and Cosponsorship in the U.S. House." LSQ 2003</li> <li>• Victor Ringe "Social Utility of Informal Institutions" APR 2009</li> </ul>
Mar. 9, 11	<b>Committees</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The American Congress, "Ch. 7: The Standing Committees"</li> </ul>
Mar. 23, 25, 30	<b>Parties and Agenda-Setting (House)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sinclair 2006, 67-184</li> </ul>
April 1, 6	<b>Obstruction and Partisanship in the Senate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Koger, <i>Filibustering</i>, 2010 ch. 6 &amp;8</li> <li>• Sinclair, 185-233</li> </ul>
April 8, 13	<b>Conference Committees and Veto Politics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sinclair, "Resolving Differences: Party Leaders and Procedural Choice" 2009 paper</li> <li>• Sinclair, 234-254</li> </ul>
April 15, 20, 22	<b>Making Laws in a Polarized Environment</b> Sinclair, 255-369
April 27, 29	<b>Is This Any Way to Run a Country?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Koger, "The Era of Congressional Dominance, 1789-1911." <i>A History of the U.S. Political System: Ideas, Interests, and Institutions</i>, 2009.</li> <li>• Binder et al, "Mending the Broken Branch," Brookings report, Jan. 2009</li> </ul>
May 11	Final, 8-10:30