

PLS 492
Congress and the Presidency
Fall 2009

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I. COURSE MEETINGS

Mon & Wed: 2:00-3:15 p.m. (Leutze Hall 110)

II. OFFICE HOURS

Mon & Wed, 3:30-5:00 p.m. or By Appointment (seoj@uncw.edu)

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the presidency and Congress cooperate and compete with each other in the American democracy. While academic tradition has followed constitutional framework by teaching Congress and the presidency separately, a new consensus is also emerging on the demand to integrate our understanding of how legislative and executive branches interact. In studying the American presidency and US Congress, the course will place emphases on diverse perspectives; constitutional, historical, institutional, and strategic. Other topics will include separation and delegation of powers; electoral connections; policy-making processes over foreign, economic, and domestic issues; and legislative-executive interaction in the era of polarization. This is a demanding course, with a substantial amount of reading. It is imperative that you read all assigned readings before the class for which they are assigned.

IV. COURSE READING

- Two books are required and available in the university book store.
 - Michael Nelson. 2006. *The Presidency and the Political System*. 8th edition. (Washington D.C.: CQ Press)
 - Steven S. Smith, Jason M. Roberts, and Ryan J. Vander Wielen. *The American Congress*. 6th edition. (Cambridge University Press)

- All other readings (#) will be available through SeaPort course website (<http://seaport.uncw.edu>)

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Midterm Exam (Oct 12) (30 %)
- Final Exam (TBA) (30 %)
- Presidential History Report & Presentation (15 %)
- Major Legislation Report & Presentation (15 %)
- Attendance and Participation (10 %)

1) In-Class Exams

There will be one midterm and a final Exam. Format is a combination of multiple choice, identification, and short essay. All readings and lectures will be fair game on the exams (50-50!).

2) Presidential History & Major Legislation Report/Presentation

Students are expected to write a one-page, single-spaced report on a president and a major legislation of their choosing from the list and then do a 10-minute presentation of their reports in class. Choose one president and one legislation from the syllabus and inform the instructor after August 26th (W), add/drop final day. More details will be provided in class.

- Letter grades will be assigned according to the following point totals:
A=92.5 or more A-=89.5-92.49 B+=87.5-89.49 B=82.5-87.49
B-=79.5-82.49 C+=77.5-79.49 C=69.5-77.49 D = 59.5-69.49
F= less than 59.5

VI. READINGS BY CLASS SESSION

Aug 19 (W)

Course Introduction

Barbara Sinclair. 2009. "Barack Obama and the 111th Congress: Politics as Usual?" *Extensions*, Spring 2009. Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center
Jonathan Woon. 2009. "Change We Can Believe In? Using Political Science to Predict Policy Change in the Obama Presidency" *PS: Political Science and Politics* (April 2009): 329-33

I. The American Presidency

Aug 24 (M) - Aug 26 (W) Approaches to Studying Presidency

- Historical, Constitutional, Psychological, and Rational-choice Approach*

Stephen Skowronek, "Presidential Leadership in Political Time," in Nelson, 89-135.

Jeffrey K. Tulis, "The Two Constitutional Presidencies," in Nelson, 57-88.
Michael Nelson, "The Psychological Presidency," in Nelson, 170-194.
Charles M. Cameron. 2000. "Rational Choice and the Presidency" in *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*. (Cambridge University Press), pp. 69-82

Aug 31 (M) - Sep 2 (W) Presidential Power

"Power-to-persuade" vs. "Unilateral power" vs. "Two-presidencies"

Scott C. James. 2005. "The Evolution of the Presidency: Between the Promise and the Fear" in Joel D. Aberbach and Mark A. Peterson ed. *The Executive Branch*. (Oxford University Press), pp.3-40.
Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (New York: Free Press), pp. 29-49
Kenneth R. Meyer. 1999. "Executive Orders and Presidential Power" *Journal of Politics* 61(2): 445-66
Richard Fleisher et al. 2000. "The Demise of the Two Presidencies" *American Politics Quarterly* 28(1): 3-25

Sep 7 (M) Labor Day Holiday

Sep 9 (W) Presidential Election

The Nomination Process and Election Strategy

Richard Pious, "The Presidency and the Nominating Process," in Nelson, 195-218
John Aldrich, John Griffin, and Jill Rickershauser, "The Presidency and the Election Campaign: Altering Voters' Priorities in the 2004 Election," in Nelson, 219-34.
Hannah Goble and Peter M. Holm, "Breaking Bonds? The Iraq War and the Loss of the Republican Dominance in National Security," *Political Research Quarterly* 62: 215-29.

Sep 14 (M) - Sep 16 (W) Power Sources and Constraints

Public Opinion, the Media, Interest Groups, and Political Parties

Marc Hetherington and Suzanne Globetti, "The Presidency and Political Trust," in Nelson, 235-54
David Karol and Edward Miguel. 2007 "The Electoral Cost of War: Iraq Casualties and the 2004 U.S. Presidential Election" *Journal of Politics* 69(3): 633-48
Daniel Tichenor, "The Presidency and Interest Groups," in Nelson, 311-40.
Lawrence Jacobs, "The Presidency and the Press," in Nelson, 283-310.
Sidney M. Milkis, "The Presidency and Political Parties," in Nelson, 341-82.

Sep 21 (M) - Sep 23 (W) Presidency-in-the-system

- ❑ *The Bureaucracy, the Courts, and the Cabinet*

John Burke, "The Institutional Presidency," in Nelson, 383-409.
David Lewis, "Presidents and the Bureaucracy," in Nelson, 410-29.
David Yalof, "The Presidency and the Judiciary," in Nelson, 481-507.
Andrew Rudalevige, "The President and the Cabinet," in Nelson, 533-56.

Sep 28 (M) - Sep 30 (W) The President and Congress

- ❑ *"Separated Institutions Sharing Powers"*

Matthew Dickinson, "The President and Congress," in Nelson, 455-80.
Andrew J. Polsky, "Presidency at War," in Nelson, 557-575
"Congress and the President" in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen, Ch 9.
Andrew Rudalevige. 2005. "The Executive Branch and the Legislative Process" in Joel D. Aberbach and Mark A. Peterson ed. *The Executive Branch*. (Oxford University Press), pp.419-51

Oct 5 (M) - Oct 7 (W) Fall Break and Poli-sci Day

Oct 12 (M) Midterm Exam (The American Presidency)

II. The United States Congress

Oct 14 (W) the American Congress: Modern Trends and Approaches

- ❑ *The Broken Branch?*

"The American Congress: Modern Trends" in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen, Ch.1
Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein. 2008. *The Broken Branch: How Congress is failing America and How To Get It Back on Track* (Oxford University Press), pp. 1-13
Greg Giroux. 2007. "An Old Boys' Club with New Twists" *CQ Weekly Report*, Feb 19-23, 2007
Charles Stewart III. 2001. "An (Unusual) Introduction to the Study of Congress" in *Analyzing Congress*. (New York: W.W.Norton)

Oct 19 (M) – Oct 21 (W) Evolution of US Congress and Theories of Lawmaking

□ *Constitutional Foundations, Historical Development, and Legislative Theories*

“Representation and Lawmaking in Congress: The Constitutional and Historical Context” in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen, Ch.2

Eric Schickler. 2005. “Institutional Development of Congress” in Paul J. Quirk and Sarah A. Binder ed. *The Legislative Branch*. (Oxford University Press), pp.35-62

Steven S. Smith. 2007. “Recent Theories of Party Influence: Cartel and Conditional Party Government Theory” in *Party Influence in Congress*. (Cambridge University Press), pp.114-47

Wendy J. Schiller. 2000. “A Theory of Dual Representation” in *Partners and Rivals: Representation in U.S. Senate Delegations*. (Princeton University Press), pp.12-32

Oct 26 (M) – Oct 28 (W) Electoral Connection and Members of Congress

□ *Getting Elected and Strategic*

“Congressional Elections and Policy Alignments” in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen, Ch.3

“Members, Goals, Resources, and Strategies” in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen, Ch.4

David Mayhew. 1987. “The Electoral Connection and the Congress” in Mathew McCubbins and Terry Sullivan ed. *Congress: Structure and Policy*. (Cambridge University Press), pp. 18-29

Larry M. Bartels. 1991. “Constituency Opinion and Congressional Policy Making: The Reagan Defense Build Up” *American Political Science Review* 85(2): 457-74

Nov 2 (M) – Nov 4 (W) Inside Congress: Institutions of Congress

□ *Committees, Rules, Parties, and Legislative Processes*

“The Standing Committees” (Ch. 6) & “Parties and Leaders” (Ch. 5) in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen

Julie Dolan and Marni Ezra. “The Legislative Process of the House” *CQ Legislative Simulation* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press)

Sarah A. Binder and Steven S. Smith. 1997. “The Politics and Principle of the Filibuster” in *Politics or Principle? Filibustering in the United States Senate*. (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press), pp. 1-27

Nov 9 (M) – Nov 11 (W) Party Polarization

□ *A Myth or Real?: Causes and Consequences of Polarized Parties in US Congress*

Keith T. Poole, “The Decline and Rise of Party Polarization in Congress during the Twentieth Century,” *Extensions*, Fall 2005. Carl

Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center

Sean M. Theriault. 2006. "Party Polarization in the US Congress: Member Replacement and Member Adaptation" *Party Politics* 12(4): 483-503

Gary C. Jacobson. "Party Polarization in National Politics: The Electoral Connection" in Jon R. Bond and Richard Fleisher ed. *Polarized Politics: Congress and the President in a Partisan Era*. (Washington D.C.: CQ Press), pp. 9-30

Jungkun Seo and Sean M. Theriault. 2009. "Moderate Coalitions in a Polarized Congress" *A Paper presented at the 2008 Midwest Political Science Association Conference, Chicago, IL.*

III. Congress, the President and Policymaking

Nov 16 (M) – Nov 18 (W) Patterns of Policymaking: Partners or Partisans?

Lance T. LeLoup and Steven A. Shull. 2003. "Patterns of Policymaking: Partners or Partisans?" in *The President and Congress: Collaboration and Combat in National Policymaking*, 2nd edition (New York: Longman), pp. 1-31

❑ Foreign and Economic Policymaking

Andrew J. Polsky, "Collective Inaction: Presidents, Congress, and Unpopular Wars," *Extensions*, Spring 2008. Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center, University of Oklahoma

David Skidmore and William Gates. 1997. "After Tiananmen: The Struggle over U.S. Policy toward China in the Bush Administration" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 27 (Summer 1997):514-39

"Congress and Budget Politics" in Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen, Ch. 12.

Peter Trubowitz and Jungkun Seo. 2009. "Partisan Ambition and Scapegoat Theory" *A Paper presented at the 2009 American Political Science Association Meeting, Toronto, ON, Canada, Sep 3-6.*

Nov 23 (M) & Nov 30 (M) Social and Domestic Policymaking

Byron W. Daynes and Glen Sussman. "Social Policy and White House Politics: An Examination of the Presidency from Franklin D. Roosevelt to George W. Bush" in Jeffrey Cohen and David Nice ed. *The Presidency: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. (Boston: McGraw Hill), pp. 294-309

Lance T. LeLoup and Steven A. Shull. 2003. "Civil Rights Policy" in *The President and Congress: Collaboration and Combat in National Policymaking*, 2nd edition (New York: Longman), pp. 129-155

Andrew Rudalevige, 2003, "'No Child Left Behind': Forging a Congressional Compromise," in Paul E. Peterson and Martin R. West, ed., *No Child Left Behind? The Politics and Practice of School Accountability* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).

Nov 25 (W)

Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec 2 (W)

Last Class Day

TBA

Final Exam (Congress and Policymaking)