

# The Legislative Process

Political Science 325  
Spring Quarter 2002

Meets Wednesdays 2:00pm-4:50pm in Harris 205

Instructor: Michael Heaney  
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## Course Description

This course investigates the politics of legislative processes at the national level in the United States. We begin by considering legislation within the constitutional and electoral framework of American government and politics. In the second part of the course we crack open the internal politics of Congress with in-depth examination of the committee system, political parties, and the deliberative process in the chamber floors. The third part of the course probes the inter-institutional environment of legislation by exploring the role of interest groups, the dynamics of veto bargaining between the President and Congress, congressional oversight, and the say of the courts in the legislative process.

## Requirements and Grading

1. The class requires regular attendance at lectures and constructive participation in discussion sections. Discussion sections are particularly important, as they expand the opportunity to refine your thinking on many issues raised in the course.

All students register for one and only one discussion section:

<u>Section</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
60	Thursday	1pm-1:50pm	Fisk B17
61	Friday	11am-11:50am	Harris 203
62	Friday	2pm-2:50pm	Harris 307

2. Students will be asked to write two short papers of approximately three pages in length, reacting to the major themes and readings of the course.
3. An in-class, closed-book final exam will be given during finals week on June 12.

Materials will be evaluated by the teaching assistant in consultation with the instructor. The final grade breakdown will be as follows:

1. Attendance and Participation – 20% of course grade
2. First Short Paper – 15% of course grade
3. Second Short Paper due – 25% of course grade
4. Final Exam on June 13 – 40% of course grade

## Reading

The following required books are available for purchase at SBX Books:

1. Joel D. Aberbach, *Keeping a Watchful Eye: The Politics of Congressional Oversight* (Brookings, 1990).
2. Joseph M. Bessette, *The Mild Voice of Reason: Deliberative Democracy and American National Government* (Chicago, 1994).
3. Charles M. Cameron, *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power* (Cambridge, 2000).
4. Christopher J. Deering and Steven S. Smith, *Committees in Congress*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (Congressional Quarterly, 1997).
5. Gary Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (Longman, 2001).
6. R. Shep Melnick, *Between the Lines: Interpreting Welfare Rights* (Brookings, 1994), Chapters 1-6 and 11-13.
7. David W. Rhode, *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House* (Chicago, 1991).
8. John Wright, *Interest Groups and Congress: Lobbying, Contributions, and Influence* (Allyn and Bacon, 1996).
9. Reading packet available at Quartet Copies.

All books are on reserve at the Main University Library.

# Course Outline

## ***Part I – The Constitutional and Political Context***

### **April 3 – Legislating in the U.S. Constitutional System**

#### Recommended Background Reading

- Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers* (Bantam Books, 1982), Nos. 10, 47-66 and *The Constitution of the United States of America*.
- Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, and Margaret Weir, *We the People: An Introduction to American Politics* (W.W. Norton, 2001), Chapter 13.
- Jack C. Plano and Milton Greenberg, *The American Political Dictionary, Eleventh Edition* (Harcourt, 2002), Chapter 4.

#### Discussion Sections: Elections Preview

- Video on “Mr. More Runs for Washington”

### **April 10 – Elections and Congressional Motivation**

- Gary Jacobson, *The Politics of Congressional Elections*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (Longman, 2001), Chapters 1-3 and 5-6.

#### Discussion Sections: 2002 Midterm Elections

- “Peering Down the Road to November Elections,” *The New York Times on the Web* (March 2002).
- Dan Balz and David S. Broder, “So Much to Win – or Lose – in 2002,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (January 14-20, 2002): 12-13.
- Helen Dewar, “Girding for the Battle of the Senate,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (June 11-17, 2001): 13.
- Richard L. Berke, “G.O.P. Gives Help to House Hopefuls,” *The New York Times on the Web* (March 3, 2002).

## ***Part II – Inside Congressional Politics***

### **April 17 – The Committee System**

- Christopher J. Deering and Steven S. Smith, *Committees in Congress*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (*Congressional Quarterly*, 1997), Chapters 1-3 and 5.

#### Discussion Sections: Reforming Committees

- Stephen Labaton, “The 2000 Campaign: The Arizona Senator; As Commerce Chairman, McCain is Hard to Define,” *The New York Times on the Web* (February 18, 2000).
- Thom Shanker, “Senate Committee Cuts Money From Missile Defense Plan,” *The New York Times on the Web* (September 8, 2001).
- Lizette Alvarez, “House Republicans Play Musical Chairs for a Chance to Lead,” *The New York Times on the Web* (December 6, 2000).
- Lizette Alvarez, “Honoring ’95 Vow, House Republicans Replace 13 Chiefs,” *The New York Times on the Web* (January 5, 2001).

### **April 24 – Parties and Leadership**

- David W. Rhode, *Parties and Leaders in the Postreform House* (Chicago, 1991), entire.

#### Discussion Sections: Reforming Committees

- Juliet Eilperin, “The Making of ‘Madam Whip’,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (January 14-20): 6-8.
- Alison Mitchell, “Rough Ride in the House,” *The New York Times on the Web* (July 27, 2001).
- Raymond Hernandez, “Latino Groups Seek a Top Democratic House Post,” *The New York Times on the Web* (March 10, 2002).
- Richard L. Berke, “Trent Lott and His Fierce Freshmen,” *The New York Times on the Web* (February 2, 1997).

### **May 1 – Deliberation and Debate**

- Joseph M. Bessette, *The Mild Voice of Reason: Deliberative Democracy and American National Government* (Chicago, 1994), Chapters 1-6 and 8.

Discussion Sections: Simulation of floor debate

- FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE at the beginning of section

### ***Part III – Inter-Institutional Dynamics***

#### **May 8 – Lobbying and Campaign Finance**

- John Wright, *Interest Groups and Congress: Lobbying, Contributions, and Influence* (Allyn and Bacon, 1996), Chapters 3-5.

Discussion Sections: Debate on Campaign Finance Reform

- Thomas B. Edsall, “Money Will Still Talk, but Differently,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (February 25-March 3, 2002):12.
- “Excerpts From House Debate on the Shays-Meehan Campaign Finance Bill,” *The New York Times on the Web* (February 14, 2002).
- Alison Mitchell, “Fearing Limits on Soft Money, Parties Fill Cooffers,” *The New York Times on the Web* (February 11, 2002).
- Mitch McConnell, “In Defense of Soft Money,” *The New York Times on the Web* (April 1, 2001).
- Dan Morgan and Juliet Eilperin, “A Case Study in Campaign Finance,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (January 7-13, 2002): 13.

#### **May 15 – Presidential-Congressional Bargaining**

- Charles M. Cameron, *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power* (Cambridge, 2000), Chapters 1-4 and 7-9.

Discussion Sections: Clinton, Bush, and Congress: Negotiations and Love Songs

- Amy Goldstein and Dana Milibank, “Now, Real Bipartisanship?,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (May 28-June 3, 2001): 6.
- Richard W. Stevenson, “Veto of Estate-Tax Repeal Survives Vote in House,” *The New York Times on the Web* (September 8, 2000).
- Marc Lacey, “President’s Veto Sets Up a Battle on Marriage Tax,” *The New York Times on the Web* (August 6, 2000).
- Robert Pear and Robin Toner, “Bush Demands Senate Changes on Patient Bill,” *The New York Times on the Web* (June 22, 2001).

## **May 22 – Congressional Oversight**

- Joel D. Aberbach, *Keeping a Watchful Eye: The Politics of Congressional Oversight* (Brookings, 1990), Chapters 1-6 and 9.

### Discussion Sections: Reigning in the IRS

- SECOND PAPER DUE at the beginning of section
- Lizette Alvarez, “Senate Hearing Open With Talk of a Sweeping I.R.S. Shake-Up,” *The New York Times on the Web* (January 29, 1998).
- Richard W. Stevenson, “Senate Votes 97-0 to Overhaul I.R.S. After Complaints,” *The New York Times on the Web* (May 8, 1998).
- Alison Mitchell, “A Nation Challenged: Intelligence Activities; House Panel Calls for ‘Cultural Revolution’ in F.B.I. and C.I.A.,” *The New York Times on the Web* (October 3, 2001).
- John Lancaster, “Ashcroft on the Hot Seat,” *The Washington Post National Weekly Edition* (December 10-16, 2001): 11.

## **May 29 – Courts and the Interpretation of Legislation**

- R. Shep Melnick, *Between the Lines: Interpreting Welfare Rights* (Brookings, 1994), Chapters 1-6 and 11-13.

## **June 5 – Optional Review Sessions**

- Instructor to hold review lecture during class time.
- Teaching assistant to hold question-and-answer sessions during discussion times.

## **Thursday, June 13, 9am – FINAL EXAM**