

# POLI 100B. The US Congress

Patrick Hulme

Spring 2023

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Office Hours: 10am-12pm Wednesdays

Zoom: [ucsd.zoom.us/j/98490754506](https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/98490754506)

Class Hours: 12:30-1:50 Tues/ Thurs

Class Room: York 2622

TA #1: Narmin Butt ([nbutt@ucsd.edu](mailto:nbutt@ucsd.edu))

OH: 12-2pm Thursdays

Zoom: [ucsd.zoom.us/j/7327855585](https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/7327855585)

TA# 2: Cassidy Reller ([creller@ucsd.edu](mailto:creller@ucsd.edu))

OH: 2-4pm Thursdays

Zoom: [ucsd.zoom.us/j/8798525897](https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/8798525897)

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## Course Description

The United States Congress is the most studied branch of U.S. Government, and it is central to our understanding of policy, elections, and representative democracy. The purpose of this course is to examine two fundamental questions: (1) what do members of Congress do and why and (2) how do the individual and collective actions of members of Congress explain national policy? We will examine the process of legislating as well as the role of political parties, leaders, and interest groups. Throughout, we will study how Congress has evolved and consider its effectiveness as an institution. This course will examine the nomination and election of members of Congress, constituent relationships, the development of the institution, formal and informal structures, leadership, comparisons of House with Senate, lobbying, and relationship with the executive branch. We will also compare the role of Congress in domestic policy to its role in foreign policy.

## Required Materials

The following book is required (print or e-book version); either the first or second edition is fine. It is available at the campus bookstore.

- Shipan, Charles R., E. Scott Adler, and Jeffery A. Jenkins. *The United States Congress*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton Company

All other required readings will be available online through UCSD's academic journal access (you will need to use the university's VPN in order to access these electronically if you are off-campus).

## Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with University rules and regulations. Note that this applies to exams, simulation activities, written papers, and any other form of class assignment. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

## Course Requirements

- Midterm (35%): Held on Thursday, May 4th. The midterm will cover all class material covered through (and including) class on Tuesday, May 2nd. Midterm will be taken in class (closed note). It will be a mix of multiple-choice questions and an essay answer.
- Member of Congress Background (20%): Due Tuesday, May 16th. You will choose a member of Congress and research the member online in order to answer questions on the member's background, electoral history, and legislative activity. Questions for this assignment (approximately 2 double-spaced pages) will be distributed on Canvas.
- Final Exam (45%): The final exam will be cumulative and held on the date assigned by the university (Monday June 12th). Final will be taken in class (closed note). It will be a mix of multiple-choice questions, short answers, and essay answers.

## Office Hours

My OH will be held on Wednesdays 10-12 on zoom.

- Zoom link here: [ucsd.zoom.us/j/98490754506](https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/98490754506)
- Sign up for a 15 minute slot here: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zTRW03ICQXbKj\\_SbXDp3XjszxDXmykVyASbY-LozI7Y/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zTRW03ICQXbKj_SbXDp3XjszxDXmykVyASbY-LozI7Y/edit#gid=0)

## Schedule

### Week 01, 04/03 - 04/07: Introduction; Origins and Development of Congress

- Adler et al. Chapter 1: "Representation and Governing in a Separated System"
- Adler et al. Chapter 2: "The Historical Development of Congress"
- Polsby, Nelson W. "The Institutionalization of the U.S. House of Representatives." *The American Political Science Review* 62, no. 1 (1968): 144–68.

### Week 02, 04/10 - 04/14: Representation

- Adler et al. Chapter 4: "Representation"
- Jacobson, Gary C. "Partisan Polarization in American Politics: A Background Paper." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (2013): 688–708.
- Griffin, John D. "When and Why Minority Legislators Matter." *Annual Review of Political Science* 17, no. 1 (2014): 327–36. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-033011-205028>.

### Week 03, 04/17 - 04/21: Congressional Elections

- Adler et al. Chapter 3: "Elections"
- Draper, Robert. "The League of Dangerous Mapmakers." *The Atlantic*, September 20, 2012. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/10/the-league-of/309084/>.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M. de Figueiredo, and James M. Snyder. "Why Is There so Little Money in U.S. Politics?" *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17, no. 1 (2003): 105–30.

### Week 04, 04/24 - 04/28: Committees and Oversight

- Adler et al. Chapter 5: "Committees"
- McCubbins, Mathew D., and Thomas Schwartz. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms." *American Journal of Political Science* 28, no. 1 (February 1984): 165. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2110792>.

### Week 05, 05/01 - 05/05: Parties and Leadership

- Adler et al. Chapter 6: "Parties"

\*\*\*\*MIDTERM: Thursday May 4 (In class)\*\*\*\*

### Week 06, 05/08 - 05/12: Rules, Process. and Policymaking

- Adler et al. Chapter 7: "Policy Making"
- Adler et al. Chapter 8: "The Legislative Effectiveness of Congress and its Members"

**Week 07, 05/15 - 05/19: Lobbying and Interest Groups**

- Adler et al. Chapter 12: "Interest Groups"
- Adler et al. Chapter 9: "Congress and the President"

**\*\*\*\*Member of Congress Background Due: Tuesday May 16 \*\*\*\***

**Week 08, 05/22 - 05/26: Congress and other Institutions**

- Adler et al. Chapter 10: "Congress and the Bureaucracy"
- Adler et al. Chapter 11: "Congress and the Courts"

**Week 09, 05/29 - 06/02: Foreign Policy**

- Friedrichs, Gordon M., and Jordan Tama. "Polarization and US Foreign Policy: Key Debates and New Findings." *International Politics* 59, no. 5 (October 2022): 767–85.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, William G. Howell, and David E. Lewis. "Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Reevaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis." *The Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (January 2008): 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381607080061>.
- Wildavsky, Aaron. "The Two Presidencies," *Trans-Action*, 4 (1966).
- Lowande, Kenneth, and Charles R. Shipan. "Where Is Presidential Power? Measuring Presidential Discretion Using Experts." *British Journal of Political Science*, September 6, 2021, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123421000296>.

**Week 10, 06/05 - 06/09: War Powers**

- Burns, Sarah. "Presidents Were Never Meant to Have Unilateral War Powers." *Foreign Affairs*, November 11, 2020. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-11-11/presidents-were-never-meant-have-unilateral-war-powers>.
- Hulme, M. Patrick. "A Not-So-Imperial Presidency - Lawfare," March 10, 2023.
- Kriner, Douglas L. "Obama's Authorization Paradox: Syria and Congress's Continued Relevance in Military Affairs." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (2014): 19.

**\*\*\*\*FINAL: Monday June 12 (11:30-2:30 in class)\*\*\*\***