

**BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & GOVERNMENT**

GOVT 348: U.S. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

FALL 2021

3 Credits

Instructor: Dr. William B. Lewis

Office Location: MLK, Room 0202

Class Schedule: MWF 12:00-12:50 p.m.

Phone #: (301) 860-3602

Office Hours: M 11:00 am-12 pm

Email Address: wlewis@bowiestate.edu

M 1:00-4:00 pm

(Zoom) W 1:00-3:00 pm, and by Appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is a comparative analysis of legislatures in national and state governments with emphasis on rules and procedures, party leadership, relationship to the executive, interest groups and legislative behavior.

II. REQUIRED TEXT

Davidson, Roger H. et al. (eds.). *Congress and Its Members* (17th ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage CQ Press, .

RECOMMENDED/SUPPLEMENTAL TEXTS

Oleszek, Walter J. et al. (eds.). *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process* (10th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage CQ Press, 2016.

Smith, Stevens S., Jason M. Roberts & Ryan J. Vander Wielen (eds.). *The American Congress* (9th ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

III. INSTRUCTIONAL MODE: The course is taught online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The class will meet via Zoom on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12:00-12:50 p.m.

IV. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- a) To understand the evolution of the legislatures;
- b) To examine the legislative life of members of the legislatures;
- c) To study the legislative process;
- d) To analyze the relationship between legislatures, political parties and interest groups;
- e) To study the interaction of the legislatures with the executive and the courts; and

- f) To evaluate the changing nature of legislatures.

V. STUDENT REQUIREMENTS:

A. Attendance

- 1) Students are required to attend class sessions regularly and punctually.
- 2) A record of attendance will be maintained throughout the semester.
- 3) It is the responsibility of students to make-up for all work missed during any period of absence.

B. Examinations

- 1) Students will be given two (2) units examinations.
- 2) Students will be required to take the final examination.
- 3) The examinations will be a combination of short answer questions and essay questions. They will cover the lectures, reading assignments, and class handouts. Class participation is based on students' analysis of assigned readings and meaningful contributions to the ongoing class discussions. The final examination will be comprehensive. **THE FINAL EXAM MAY ONLY BE TAKEN ON THE DATES AND TIMES LISTED FOR EACH CLASS AS PUBLISHED IN THE FALL 2021 SCHEDULE OF CLASSES.**
- 4) The mid-term evaluation will be based on the average of the two (2) unit examinations administered in September and October 2021.

C. Term Paper

- 1. Each student will be required to write a paper of no more than ten pages long, typed and double-spaced.
- 2. An outline of the paper will be required.
- 3. The term paper project is as follows:

The student project for this course involves doing an analysis of a piece of legislation, and writing a report of the analysis. You may pick any major bill (U.S. Congress or Maryland General Assembly) you wish for analysis.

The following questions should be considered guidelines in writing the paper:

- a) Where did the bill come from? Who initiated it? Who were the key players or groups?
 - b) What problem or issue of public policy was the proposal intended to deal with?
 - c) What did the committee do with the bill? What issues were emphasized in hearings? What interests were represented in hearings? How did the committee change the original bill?
 - d) Did the bill pass the House and Senate in the same form? What did the conference committee do? What was done on the House and Senate floors with conference reports?
 - e) What action did the president or governor take on the bill? If he/she vetoed the bill, what action did Congress or Maryland State Legislature take in response?
4. Students are required to follow these procedures and deadlines in completing the paper:

Procedures

Deadlines

A. Selection of Topic	September 15, 2021
B. Submission of outline	September 29, 2021
C. Submission of draft copy	October 29, 2021
D. Submission of final copy	November 19, 2021

5. The term papers will be graded as follows:

a) Thesis Statement (with clarity, concept and definitions)	10%
b) Organization and Coherence (mechanics such as paragraphing, sentence structure, proper grammar, correct use of words/language)	20%
c) Critical Thinking and Analysis (ability to synthesize and make certain inferences based on contextual relationships)	20%
d) Depth of Research (literature review, citations)	40%
e) Citations' Format (endnotes, footnotes, bibliography)	10%
Total:	100%

6. **Plagiarism:** Any plagiarism will result in a failing grade. This includes copying materials from the internet without proper notations.

7. The term papers are due on November 19, 2021. Papers will not be accepted after the due date.
8. **Class Participation:** Students are expected to participate in class discussions. Students will be required to give oral presentations on assigned readings.
9. **Grading Scale & Distribution of Percentages:**

a.	First Unit Exam	25%
b.	Second Unit Exam	25%
c.	Final Exam	20%
d.	Term Paper	20%
e.	Class Participation	<u>10%</u>
Total:		100%

Note: (i) The numerical equivalent of letter grades are:

90-100	= A
80-89	= B
70-79	= C
60-69	= D
Below 60	= F

(ii) Final Grades will not be changed unless there is an error in calculation.

10. The instructor reserves the right to modify the organization of the course content and may adjust the grading scale in the computation of the final grades.
11. All exams and assignments will be taken or handed in as scheduled. Failure to do so will result in zero points earned for the exercise; therefore, except in the most extreme circumstances, (death in family, child birth, auto accident, hospitalization) there will be no make-up. An INCOMPLETE (I) grade will rarely be given and only in cases where the student is doing passing work and has a valid excuse (distress or illness). Please contact the professor prior to an exam in case of an emergency/illness which would be a cause for an official excuse from the DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES. However, the final grades will not be changed unless there is an error in computation.
12. Students are expected to maintain regular and punctual attendance; there will be a roll call at the beginning of each class session. Therefore, excessive tardiness or unexcused absences will not be tolerated; any such documented absences may negatively impact the final letter grade. In any case, the University's rule states that "a student may be advised by the instructor to withdraw from a course for excessive absences. Five (5) or more hours of unexcused absences before the final date for withdrawal may result in the student's receiving a grade of "F" for the course".

VI. COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1:

- Course Overview
- Review of Course Syllabus

1. The Evolution of Legislatures

- Powers of Congress (Read Article 1 of the U.S. Constitution)
- The Founding of Congress

- Texts: Chapter 1, “The Two Congresses”
Chapter 2, “The Evolution of Modern Congress” and
Federalist Papers, 40-55

WEEKS 2 & 3:

2. Legislatures and Legislators in the Political System

- Recruitment of Candidates
- Representation and Apportionment

- Text: Chapter 3, “Going for It: Recruitment and Candidacy”

FIRST UNIT EXAM: September 22, 2021

3. Legislators and the Electoral Process

- Campaign Strategies
- Campaign Resources
- Campaign Techniques

- Text: Chapter 4, “Making It: The Electoral Game”

For further readings on Congress and lawmaking, refer to Walter J. Oleszek et al., *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*, Chapters 1-10

WEEK 4:

4. The Legislators

- Congressional Roles
- Legislation and Constituencies
- Members and the Media

- Text: Chapter 5, “Being There: Hill Styles and Home Styles”

WEEK 5

5. Leaders and Parties

- Party Leaders in Congress
- Party Caucuses, Committees and Informal Groups
- Factionalism within Congressional Parties

-Text: Chapter 6, “Leaders and Parties in Congress”

SECOND UNIT EXAM: October 20, 2021

WEEK 6:

6. The Legislative Committees

- The Purposes of Committees
- Types of Committees
- The Assignment Process
- Committee Leadership
- Committee Staff
- Committee Reform and Change

-Text: Chapter 7, “Committees: Workshops of Congress”

Steven S. Smith et al., *The American Congress*, Chapter 6: “The Standing Committees”

WEEKS 7-8:

7. The Legislative Process

- Introduction of Bills
- Referral of Bills
- House Floor Procedures
- Senate Floor Procedures
- Resolving House-Senate Differences

-Text: Chapter 8, “Congressional Rules and Procedures” and Chapter 9, “Decision Making in Congress”

WEEK 9:

8. Congress and the President

- The President as Legislator
- The Veto Power
- Legislative-Executive Cooperation

-Text: Chapter 10, “Congress and the President”
Steven S. Smith et al., *The American Congress*, Chapter 9: “Congress and the President”

WEEK 10:

9. Congress and the Bureaucracy

- Organization of the Executive Branch
- Senate Confirmation of Presidential Appointees
- Impeachment
- Legislative Oversight

-Text: Chapter 11, “Congress and the Bureaucracy”

WEEKS 11:

10. Congress and the Courts

- The Federal Courts
- Courts as Umpires
- The Senate and Judicial Nominations

-Text: Chapter 12, “Congress and the Courts”
Steven S. Smith et al., *The American Congress*, Chapter 10: “Congress and the Courts”

WEEK 12:

11. Congress and Interest Groups

- Interest Groups Methods-Lobbying

- Groups and the Electoral Connection
- Groups, Lobbying and the Legislative Process
- Regulation of Lobbying

-Text: Chapter 13, “Congress and Organized Interest”

WEEK 13:

12. Congress and Budget Politics

- Stages of Policy Making
- Types of Domestic Policies
- Characteristics of Congressional Policy-Making

-Text: Chapter 14, “Congress, Budgets, Domestic Policy-Making”

Walter Oleszek, *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*, “The Congressional Budget Process”

WEEK 14:

13. Congress and National Security Policies

- Constitutional Powers
- Strategic Policies
- Crisis Policies

-Text: Chapter 15, “Congress and National Security Policies”

WEEK 15:

14. Congress and the American People

- Observation about Lawmaking
- Assessing the Congressional Process
- Twenty-First Century Challenges

-Text: Chapter 16, “The Two Congresses and the American People”

Disability Statement:

Students who have a disability or think they need special accommodations should report immediately to Disability Support Services (DSS), located in Suite 082 (Room 8212), in the Thurgood Marshall Library, or call Dr. Michael S. Hughes, DSS Coordinator at (301) 860-4047. Go to the following website for more

information: <https://www.bowiestate.edu/academics/support-services/disability-support-services/>

Bowie State University shall not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, age, ancestry or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, or veteran status (ADA and Non-Discrimination Policy).

BSU Blackboard: The instructor will post some items (announcements, course syllabus, examination-study guides, etc.) on the BSU Blackboard.

Final Examination: TBA

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aldrich, John. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Binder, Sarah. 2003. *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.

Cameron, Charles M. 2008. *Party Polarization in Congress*. Cambridge University Press.

Cox, Gary C & Matthew D. McCubbins. 2005. *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Part Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*.

Dodson, Debra L. 2006. *The Impact of Women in Congress*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Fisher, Louis. 2010. *On Appreciating Congress: The Peoples' Branch*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Fisher, Louis. 2008. *The Supreme Court and Congress: Rival Interpretation*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Hibbing, John R. & Elizabeth Theiss-Morse. 1995. *Congress as Public Enemy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Howell, William G. 2003. *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

- Lee, Frances E. 2009. *Beyond Ideology: Politics, principles, and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mann, Thomas E. & Norman J. Ornstein. 2008. *The Broken Branch: How Congress is failing America and How to Get it Back on Track*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, Kristina C. 2010. *Congressional Representation: The View from Capitol Hill*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Oleszek, Walter et al. (eds.). *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process* (10th ed.). Los Angeles: Sage CQ Press, 2016.
- Rohde, David W. 1991. *Parties and Leaders in the Post-Reagan House*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Smith, Steven S., Jason M. Roberts & Ryan J. Vander Wielen (eds.). 2013. *The American Congress*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, Steven S. 2001. *Party Influence in Congress*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Swain, Carol. 1993. *Black Faces, Black Interests: The Representation of African Americans in Congress*. MA: Harvard University Press.
- Theriault, Sean. 2008. *Party Polarization in Congress*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Woodward, Bob. 2012. *The Price of Politics*. New York: Simon & Shuster.

JOURNALS

American Journal of Political Science
Legislative Studies Quarterly
American Political Science Review
Congress and the Presidency
Quarterly Journal of Political Science
Annual Review of Political Science
Journal of Politics