

PSC 311: Congress and the Executive
Spring 2019
Baxter Hall 311
TTh 1:10-2:25
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'If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself' –Publius, Federalist #51

The American system of checks and balances is one of the most frequently cited triumphs of the U.S. Constitution. Why and how has this system endured for so long? After all, the president is the highest profile politician in the United States, yet Congress is the chief appropriating arm of the federal government. Each of these institutions have legitimate constitutional claims to power but oftentimes have competing interests. In this course, we will explore the relationship between these two institutions that, despite the necessity of their cooperation to pass laws, remains deeply conflictual. Taking both an historical and contemporary view of executive-legislative relations, we will identify the features of this relationship that the Founders aptly predicted would take precedence and those they did not. Finally, we will look to see how this relationship looks to change in the future.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change at any time throughout the semester. You will be informed of all changes and a revised copy of the syllabus will be available on Canvas.

Textbooks

- Dodd, Lawrence C. and Bruce I. Oppenheimer. 2017. *Congress Reconsidered, 11th Edition*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- Nelson, Michael. 2018. *The Presidency and the Political System, 11th Edition*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press.
- Thurber, James A. and Jordan Tama. *Rivals for Power: Presidential-Congressional Relations, 6th Edition*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Grading

The semester will consist of two exams, two 4-6 page papers on topics we discuss throughout the semester, an in class simulation with Dr. Wells's PSC 346 students, and class participation.

Midterm Exam	20% of final grade
Final Exam	20% of final grade
Paper #1	15% of final grade
Paper #2	15% of final grade
Foreign Policy Simulation	15% of final grade
Attendance/Participation	15% of final grade

A: 93-100 B: 83-87.99 C: 73-77.99 F: 0-59.99
A-: 90-92.99 B-: 80-82.99 C-: 70-72.99
B+: 88-89.99 C+: 78-79.99 D: 60-69.99

Attendance/Participation

Attendance is not required in this course; but your performance this semester will suffer greatly if you are not regularly in class, both physically and mentally. 15% of your final course grade will be weighted towards your engagement during the 150 minutes a week we are together. You are expected to read the assigned texts and be able to discuss them during class. This does not mean you have to have mastered the entire reading list; your participation can include proposing questions for the class (including yourself) to discuss. On occasion, I will ask that you formally submit discussion questions based on the reading before class. But it is of paramount importance that you be constantly engaged with the material during class time.

Exams

There will be two exams throughout the semester. The midterm exam be administered in Baxter 311, during our regularly scheduled class time. The final exam will still be administered in Baxter 311, but will occur during the time assigned by the college. Green books will be provided to you for both exams.

You may challenge the grade of your exams. However, you may not contact me until 24 hours after the exam has been handed back. While I will review your grade with the potential for it to increase, I reserve the right to lower your grade as well.

Makeup Exams

There will be no makeup exams administered without ample cause and notice. Valid excuses include significant illness, death in the family, or required attendance at a college sponsored event (including athletics). I must receive notice of these issues *before* the scheduled date of the exam. Documentation for your absence must be given to me within one week after the exam is administered. If you miss an exam without fulfilling these duties, you will receive a 0.

Paper Assignments

Twice during this semester, you will be responsible for turning in a 4-6 page paper, using at least six sources that addresses the content we discussed in the previous week of class and the prompt listed on the syllabus. One of these papers must be turned in before Spring Break (which starts after our February 28 meeting) and the other must be turned in after Spring Break.

Foreign Policy Simulation

The final week of the semester will include an in class simulation, with Dr. Wells's American Foreign Policy students. Details of the situation you will be presented with will be announced later in the semester.

Classroom Rules

Be courteous of your peers. University is a place where ideas should and do flow freely, but all discussions should remain respectful.

Class ends at 2:25, not 2:24...or 2:23...or 2:22, etc. Please do not begin packing your things until I have indicated that class has ended. I will do everything in my power to make sure that class does not extend past 2:25.

A note about emails: Do not expect to receive any correspondence from me between the hours of 6 pm and 8 am on any day, including the night before an exam. Do not email me to ask about grades, I am not allowed to discuss those over email per FERPA regulations. If you have questions, come to my office hours or set up an appointment. You must email me from your @wabash.edu account; I will not respond to any other addresses. **Do not email me any questions about the course without first consulting the syllabus.**

The Gentleman's Rule

As with all other facets of Wabash life, the Gentleman's Rule applies to your interactions with me and your colleagues inside and outside the classroom, as well as to the completion of all academic requirements of the course. Except for leading an article discussion and data collection for the minilabs, all assignments and exams are to be completed independently, with no assistance from other people or other students' work. Remember the Wabash mission statement: "Wabash College educates men to think critically, act responsibly, lead effectively, and live humanely." Acting responsibly includes not cheating. *If there are any questions about how the standards of academic integrity apply to a specific assignment or test, please do not hesitate to talk with me for clarification before handing in the assignment.* Uncertainty about the application of these principles will not excuse a violation. Remember that you can be expelled for academic dishonesty!

The general principle is that you should **always submit work that is entirely your own**. Here are some specific examples of academic dishonesty:

- Copying another student's exam or assignment – either a current or past student.
- Copying any text from the internet (or other resource) on an assignment.
- Paraphrasing any text from any resource without providing a reference.
- Extensive paraphrasing of text from any resource even when providing a reference.
- Turning in the same assignment to multiple courses, in the same or different semesters, without prior consent from both professors.
- Taking another student's graded assignment without his permission.
- This is not an exhaustive list of violations. If you have a question, ask before you turn in the assignment.

If I find out that you have cheated on an assignment, you will receive ZERO points for that assignment, and I will turn you into the Dean for an academic dishonesty strike.

Writing Center

Do you have questions about how to start a paper? Are you struggling to get all of your ideas to fit? Do you have a draft but want someone to review it? Did you get a lower grade than expected on your last paper and want to do better? Then you need to visit the Writing Center!

No matter what your writing questions or needs, the Wabash Writing Center Consultants are eager and able to help you! Located on the second floor of the Lilly Library, the Wabash Writing Center is open to all students, faculty, and staff.

To make an appointment, go to <https://www.wabash.edu/ace/writing>, select the button labeled “Click HERE to make an appointment,” and register in the scheduling system.

If you have any questions, please email the director, Prof. Koppelman, at koppelmz@wabash.edu.

The Office of Student Enrichment

Succeeding at Wabash College takes a great deal of effort and planning. Life is complex, assignments are time consuming, and staying involved keeps you running. When you have questions about how to make everything fit into your schedule, how to study more efficiently, how to take better notes, or any other question about developing your college skill, visit the Office of Student Enrichment (OSE).

Got to <https://koppelman.youcanbook.me> to arrange a one-on-one, personalized meeting with Prof. Koppelman. No matter your questions, Prof. Koppelman will work with you to find a solution that helps you achieve your goals.

ADA Statement

Students with disabilities (apparent or invisible) are invited to confidentially discuss their situation with the disability coordinator, Heather Thrush, Director of Student Engagement and Success. If a student wishes to receive an academic accommodation, it is required that his documentation of the disability be on file with Heather Thrush, who can, in confidence, provide information and guidance. Early notification helps us all work together in the most effective ways. Heather Thrush can be reached at her office (Center Hall 112A), by phone (x6347), or by email (thrushh@wabash.edu).

Counseling Center

Garden Level of Chapel, Kevin Swaim (swaimk@wabash.edu, x6252) & Jamie Douglas (douglasj@wabash.edu, x6252). It's free! It's confidential, and this guarantee is taken seriously. Your contact with the counseling center is confidential between you and the counselor to the fullest extent of the law (confidentiality may be breached in cases such as when there is imminent danger to someone or a report of current abuse of a child or elder). Reasons Wabash students go to the counseling service include personal and academic questions, advice for family problems, stress, anger, grief and loss, conflicts with family or friends or guys in their living units, alcohol and other drugs, feeling edgy and anxious, relationships, motivation problems, sexuality, concerns about friends, just wanting someone neutral to talk to. Walk-ins 11-1 M-Th (knock if they are in session during those hours) or by appointment.

Course Schedule

All readings that are not from the required texts will be provided on Canvas

CR = Congress Reconsidered

PPS = The Presidency and the Political System

RFP = Rivals for Power

Week 1: Introduction; Constitutional Origins

Jan 17

- Course Overview; no readings

Jan 19

- Article I – U.S. Constitution
- Article II – U.S. Constitution
- Goodwin – “The Divided Legacy of Lyndon B. Johnson”
- Gregg – “George W. Bush: Domestic Affairs”

Week 2: Lawmaking

Jan 22

- Sinclair – “Multiple Paths: The Legislative Process in the House of Representatives”
- Sinclair – “Getting One Bill: Reconciling House-Senate Differences”

Jan 24

- *CR* Chapter 7
- *RFP* Chapter 2

Essay Prompt: Choose a recent (past 10 years) piece of landmark legislation that was signed into law. Document the process it went through to get to the passage stage. Make sure to note the ways in which it deviated from the “School House Rock” version of how a bill becomes a law.

Week 3: Congressional Committees

Jan 29

- *CR* Chapter 12
- Frisch and Kelly – “Self-Selection Reconsidered: House Committee Assignment Requests and Constituency Characteristics”

Jan 31

- *CR* Chapter 13

Essay Prompt: Choose a current congressional committee; it can be from the House or Senate. Explore why the membership looks the way it does and dive into the work they have done in the last ~5 years.

Week 4: Congressional Leadership

Feb 5

- *CR* Chapter 2

Feb 7

- *CR* Chapter 1

Essay Prompt: Choose a congressional leader from modern history. He or she can be from the House or the Senate. Document how they rose to that position and the ways they used their institutional power, for better or worse.

Week 5: Congressional Elections

Feb 12

- *CR* Chapter 3

Feb 14

- *CR* Chapter 4

Essay Prompt: Choose a congressional election; it can be a midterm or a presidential year election. Explain the result. Take into consideration the differences between the House and the Senate and the role that the president at the time played.

Week 6: Presidential Elections

Feb 19

- *PPS* Chapter 7

Feb 21

- *PPS* Chapter 8

Essay Prompt: Choose a modern presidential election. What were the main strategies employed by the winning candidate? Was the result inevitable? What could the losing candidate have done to avoid defeat?

Week 7: The Presidential Institution

Feb 26

- *PPS* Chapter 13
- *PPS* Chapter 17

Feb 28

- **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 8

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: President as Politician

Mar 12

- *PPS* Chapter 12

Mar 14

- *PPS* Chapter 10

Essay Prompt: Choose a notable non-campaign speech made by a sitting president. Analyze the rhetorical devices he used and whether it was effective. Explore that rationale for the timing and subject matter of the speech.

Week 10: The President v. Congress

Mar 19

- *PPS* Chapter 15

Mar 21

- *RFP* Chapter 7

Essay Prompt: Choose a presidential power that Congress has objected to. Then detail a high profile incident in which the president has used that power and how Congress responded. Provide an assessment as to how effective the president was by circumventing the legislative branch.

Week 11: The President v. Congress, Part II: Nominations

Mar 26

- *RFP* Chapter 9
- *CR* Chapter 16

Mar 28

- Gerhardt, Michael J. 2003. "The President's Role in the Federal Appointments Process" in *Federal Appointments Process: A Constitutional and Historical Analysis*.

Essay Prompt: Choose one contentious presidential nomination from the last 40 years; it can be either a nomination to the Supreme Court or a cabinet level position. Describe the facts of the confirmation process and develop a theory as to why the nomination was ultimately successful or not.

Week 12: The President v. Congress, Part III: Investigations

Apr 2

- *PPS* Chapter 20

Apr 4

- *RFP* Chapter 6

Essay Prompt: Choose a notable congressional investigation into the executive branch in the past 50 years. Describe why the investigation was started, what happened during the investigation, the result of the investigation and the political fallout of the investigation.

Week 13: Domestic Policy

Apr 9

- *RFP* Chapter 5
- *RFP* Chapter 10

Apr 11

- *PPS* Chapter 14

Essay Prompt: Choose a domestic policy area in which Congress and the president have come in conflict on multiple occasions about. Explain one instance where they came resolution and assess which institution won that particular battle and why.

Week 14: Foreign Policy

Apr 16

- *PPS* Chapter 19

Apr 18

- Meet with PSC 346

Week 15

Apr 23

- Foreign Policy Simulation (with PSC 346)

Apr 25

- Foreign Policy Simulation (with PSC 346)

FINAL EXAM TUESDAY, APRIL 30 @ 1:30 PM