Hans Hassell  
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Course Website: http://polisci2.ucsd.edu/hhassell/teaching

Course Description:  
This is a course on Congress, the legislative body of the United States. Because of the nature of Congress, it is, in essence, a class on American politics. Through a study of Congress we can see and understand many of the political debates and challenges in American politics. Over the course of the class we will discuss many of these problems and challenges: problems of representation, collective action and responsibility, the influence of money in politics, conflicts over the role of government in the economy and private life, and the costs and benefits of parties and partisanship.

Over the course of this five week class we will have the benefit of having many contemporary examples of issues and conflicts in Congress. We are studying Congress during a time of “divided government.” Republicans have retaken the House of Representatives after the 2010 election, while Democrats hold a small majority in the Senate, which they won in 2006, and control the Presidency after Barack Obama’s win in 2008. In the next month we should see debates in Congress over whether to raise the debt ceiling, as well as struggles over the role of the United States in military conflicts abroad in Afghanistan and Libya. Even though our time together is short, there is a lot going on that should enable us to learn not only from scholarly texts, but also from current events.

I have two goals for this course. First, I want us to come away from this course with a better knowledge of Congress. I will assume that students in this course already have a basic understanding of American Political History and Government, and at least a passing interest in politics. Using that knowledge and interest we will examine Congress in three ways:

1. As a group of legislators and politicians, elected by their own constituencies to represent those individuals in the legislative body  
2. As a political institution, charged with forming laws and policy for the nation, and internally organized to enhance productivity  
3. As the lawmaking institution, where the national policy agenda is set and where government oversight is based.

Second, I hope that you will also gain some insight in to how social science differs from just being a political junkie. We will examine how social scientists investigate government actions empirically, and you will do some of this investigation and study yourselves. Finally, I hope that what you learn here can be applied and integrated with the rest of your education here at UCSD.
Books:
The following books are available at the UCSD Bookstore:

- Roger H. Davidson, Walter J. Oleszek and Frances E. Lee, Congress and Its Members, 12th ed. (CQ Press, 2010) ["DOL" in the assignment schedule]. You may use any recent edition of DOL, but note that the pagination will change for some assignments.
- Barbara Sinclair, Unorthodox Lawmaking, 4th ed (CQ Press, 2010). Please use the 4th edition of Sinclair. Other editions have different case studies.

I will also have additional readings handed out in class or linked on the course website. Be sure to check the course website as I may post additional readings that are NOT currently listed on the syllabus as we progress through the course.

Because we will talk about current events and things actually going on in Congress right now (I know, crazy, but this is a political science class that actually talks about politics), it is essential that you read a good newspaper regularly such as the LA Times, the New York Times, or the Washington Post. If you prefer to get news on the web (does anyone actually read the paper these days?), I suggest the following websites

- The Hill-One Capitol Hill Newspaper (www.thehill.com)
- The Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com)
- The LA Times (www.latimes.com)
- RealClearPolitics (www.realclearpolitics.com)—A conservative news aggregator
- Memeorandum (www.memeorandum.com)—A liberal news aggregator

Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grading:

1. Class Participation and Attendance (30% of grade)
   Political Science 100B during the Winter Quarter had 250 students. We have 40. You must do the reading assignments before class and prepare to discuss them in class. Being a student at UCSD means you have a responsibility not only to learn for yourself, but to teach each other in class discussion and conversation. We also will have many in-class assignments, and an occasional quiz. Your participation and completion of these assignments is a component of your class participation grade. Because this is a small class

   One important note: The majority of this class will not be in a standard lecture format. You can divide this class into roughly three portions of class time: Discussion, Activities, and Lecture. During Discussion or Activity portions of the class please do not use a laptop. I have found them to be a distraction to those who use them and to students around them and a significant hindrance to good discussions.

2. Daily Questions (10% of grade): 1 point for writing your name, 2 points for minimally answering the question and 3 points for a thoughtful (and brief!) answer. One pass (taken by writing your name and “Pass” on the notecard) allowed during the course of the class.

3. Research paper (30% of grade): 5-7 page paper. More details to come soon.

4. Legislative Case Study (30% of grade): More details to come.
Class Mile Stones:
Wednesday, July 13—Research Paper Due
Tuesday, July 19—Inform HH about Case Study Choice
Wednesday, July 27—Legislative Case Study Due

Schedule and Assignments:
Readings that need to be read before class are listed under the date (June 29th readings need to be read before class on June 29th). Online readings are marked with an asterisk and are available on the course website (http://polisci2.ucsd.edu/hhassell/teaching)

***There may be changes to this schedule or to assigned readings. I will let you know in class and post updates online***

Monday, June 27: What are we doing here?
Review of Syllabus and Expectations
Lecture on Overview of Structure and Origins

Wednesday, June 29: The Two Congresses
Fenno, Homestyle: Perceptions of the Constituency*
Burke: Speech to the Electors at Bristol*
DOL: Chapter 1

Monday, July 4: NO CLASS HOLIDAY

Wednesday, July 6: Constituents and Casework
Assignment due: Bring in an outside source.
Fiorina: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did It*
DOL: Chapter 5

Monday, July 11: Congressional Elections Paper Due
DOL: Chapter 3 & Chapter 4
Francia et al. Chapter 3 & Chapter 4*

Wednesday, July 13: Congressional Organization
Congressional Organization (Party Organizations)
Congressional Organization (Committees)
DOL: Chapter 6 & Chapter 7

Monday, July 18: Congress and Other Branches of Government
DOL: Chapter 10, 11 and Chapter 13
Hassell and Kernell: Veto Threats and Appropriation Riders*
McCubbins and Schwartz: Police Patrols and Fire Alarms*

Tuesday, July 19: Case Study Choice Due to me by Office Hours (9-11am) via email is fine
Wednesday, July 20: The Lawmaking Process: The Normal Process vs. the Unorthodox Process
Sinclair: Chapter 1-5
DOL: Chapter 8
Koger: Position Taking and Co-Sponsorship in the U.S. House*

Monday, July 25: Unorthodox Lawmaking: Causes and Consequences
DOL: Chapter 2
Sinclair: Chapter 6, 13 and one other

Wednesday, July 27: Course Review and Follow-up
Legislative Case Study Due
Read your notes, your assignments, and other stuff from the course. Come in with one developed idea about how to improve the course.

Friday, July 29 (When Final Exam would be scheduled)