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Course Description
This course focuses on the lawmaking process in the United States Congress. This includes the process of legislating as well as the role of political parties, leaders, and interest groups. We will be discussing the development of Congress over time as well as the election of its members. The course will focus on how and why members of Congress act both in and outside the halls of the Capitol. The course serves as an introduction to the U.S. Congress, and we will be examining these issues from both a researcher and a practitioner perspective.

Readings
Readings are mandatory. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings PRIOR to class. There are two required textbooks, listed below. All other readings, including excerpts from recommended books, will be available on the TED course site or through the Library’s VPN on JSTOR.

Textbooks
Required


Recommended


Assignments
Attendance (20%): Attending class and completing in-class assignments are required.
**Policy Paper (35%)**: Choose a Member of Congress that is not from California. Describe a policy change they want, the other key policymakers, and relevant interest groups. Who is likely to support or oppose your policy both in and outside of Congress? What strategies will you employ to move it along the legislative process? What is the largest obstacle to passing your policy? Be concise and direct, 5-6 pages. Must be double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins. Due at the beginning of class on Wednesday August 23.

**Final Exam (45%)**: The final exam is scheduled for Friday September 8 at 3-6pm.

**Course Schedule**

**Day 1 (August 7)**: Introduction, Origins, and the Constitution

United States Constitution - [https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript](https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript)


Congress and Its Members – Chapter 2

**Day 2 (August 9)**: Development over Time


**Day 3 (August 14)**: Organization, Procedures, and Committees

Congress and Its Members – Chapters 8-9

Congress Reconsidered – Chapter 7

**Day 4 (August 16)**: Policymaking: Part I

Congress and Its Members – Chapter 14


Congress Reconsidered – Chapter 8

**Day 5 (August 21)**: Policymaking: Part II

Congress and Its Members – Chapter 10

Congress Reconsidered – Chapter 14

Day 6(August 23): Policymaking: Part III  
*Policy Paper Due Wednesday August 23*


Day 7(August 28): Members in Their Districts  
Fenno’s Homestyle – Chapters 3-4

Day 8(August 30): Congressional Elections: Part I  
*Politics of Congressional Elections* – Chapters 1-5

Day 9(September 4): Congressional Elections: Part II  
*Politics of Congressional Elections* – Chapter 6


Day 10(September 6): Representation and Democracy  
*Politics of Congressional Elections* – Chapter 7


**Final Exam:** Friday September 8 3-6pm

**Course Policies**  
*Attendance and Class Readings*  
Attendance and all course readings are mandatory. All readings should be completed prior to the specified date. Discussion represents a large portion of the grade, completing the readings ahead of class improves the quality and substance of discussion.
Excuse Policy
Medical documentation is required and must be turned in to apply for an extension or make-up exam. Any extension or make-up exam will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Grades
Grades will be handed out in class and/or during office hours. Grades will not be communicated via email or any other type of correspondence. It is students’ responsibility to retrieve your grades. Please write your name on all assignments and exams as it is officially registered with the University, otherwise grades may not be entered correctly.

Academic Honesty
Cheating, plagiarism and other violations of academic honesty are serious offenses. Graded assignments are not collaborative efforts in this class. You must work independently on all exams and papers. Please refer to the UCSD policy on integrity of scholarship for further details. If you are caught cheating in this course (this includes plagiarism), you will be awarded a letter grade of an F and reported to appropriate authorities.