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 or proxy server 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 Friday February 17.

Final Exam (45%): The final exam is scheduled for Friday March 24 at 1130-230.

Course Schedule
Week 1: Introduction, Origins, and the Constitution

Madison, James. 1787. The Federalist: No. 10.

Congress and Its Members – Chapter 2

Week 2: Development over Time


Week 3: Organization, Procedures, and Committees
Congress and Its Members – Chapters 8-9

Congress Reconsidered – Chapter 7

Week 4: Policymaking: Part I
Congress and Its Members – Chapter 14


Congress Reconsidered – Chapter 8
Week 5: Policymaking: Part II
Congress and Its Members – Chapter 10

Congress Reconsidered – Chapter 14


Week 6: Policymaking: Part III
Policy Paper Due Friday February 17


Week 7: Members in Their Districts
Fenno’s Homestyle – Chapters 3-4

Week 8: Congressional Elections: Part I
Politics of Congressional Elections – Chapters 1-5

Week 9: Congressional Elections: Part II
Politics of Congressional Elections – Chapter 6


Week 10: Representation and Democracy
Politics of Congressional Elections – Chapter 7


Final Exam: Friday March 24 1130-230
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.