THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

This course is primarily concerned with the United States Congress although there will be some discussion of state legislatures where comparisons and contrasts are relevant. It is intended that the course provide an understanding of Congress as both a political and policy-making institution.

READINGS:


Sidlow, Edward: Freshman Orientation: House Style and Home Style, CQ Press. (This book is available as a used book for as little as 6 bucks on Amazon.)

Daily Paper:

You should also remain abreast of current American politics. To that end, the New York Times provides a nice discount program for college and university students. Details can be found at newyorktimes.com/student, or by phone, 888-nyt-coll (698-2655). There are also complementary copies of the Times available at several locations (including this building) on campus.

Assignments

There will be an essay type take home midterm exam. The midterm is scheduled for Feb. 19, 2014. There will also be an optional final exam, currently scheduled for 11:30 am, Mon. 4/28/2012. More details will be provided in class regarding the exams. Finally, there will be a 5-7 page paper.** I will provide the paper topic after the mid-term exam. The paper
will be due on the last regularly scheduled day of class, Mon. 4/21. Each Assignment is worth 50 points. There will also be occasions where students will have the opportunity to earn extra credit points.

** I do not accept emailed papers. The reason for this is quite practical. We do not necessarily use the same word processing programs. When I did allow emailed papers, I always had difficulty opening some of them, and my computer froze from others. Consequently, I expect to receive a hard copy of your papers, stapled in the upper left hand corner of the title page, pages in order, no binders, folders, petrochemical plastic covers, etc. You will properly cite material in your papers. Wikipedia is not an acceptable source.

Communication and comportment issues.

Email.
If you would like me to read your email, please use your emich address to communicate with me. Please put the Course # and meeting time in the Subject Line of your Email—and your name, first and last, at the bottom of your email. I have a strange desire to know who I am “talking” to, and who is “talking” to me. Feel free to call that a personality disorder. Do not continuously hit reply in a “conversation” with me. Renew the subject, which is a polite way of letting me know what we are talking about. Please do not make or receive phone calls or texts during class. If your phone rings, I reserve the right to answer it and leave you with the consequences of whatever I tell the person calling you. (If you have a legitimate need to make or receive a call, family or health matter, call from family over-seas on military deployment, etc, please let me know that to be the case and, as inconspicuously as possible, leave the room and conduct your conversation.)

It would be great if you also kept the following in mind:
Our classroom is not,
1. An Internet café
2. A piano bar
3. A place to snooze
4. A place to do work for other classes
READING SCHEDULE: *

1/6- Congress Historically
1/13 Davidson & Oleszek, Ch. 1-2

1/15 - Recruitment and Elections
2/3 Davidson & Oleszek, Ch. 3-4

2/5 - The Nature of Representation
2/17 Davidson & Oleszek, Ch. 5

2/19 MIDTERM EXAM

Winter Break 2/24-3/2

3/3- Leadership and Adaptation of Members
3/12 Davidson & Oleszek, Ch. 6-9
Sidlow, (Whole book between now and 4/19.)

3/17- Committees and the Legislative Process
4/14 Davidson & Oleszek, Ch. 6-9

4/16- Policy Making
4/21 Davidson & Oleszek, Ch. 10-16

4/28 Optional FINAL EXAM 11:30am

* Dates are approximate

Addendum (material the university administration wants on the syllabus) aka the small print.

Please be aware of these important WI Semester 2014 dates:

1/10/14 Last date to add courses via the web (a)
3/6/14 Last date to add courses with departmental authorization
1/15/14 Last date for 100% tuition refund (individual or total withdraw from term)
3/24/14 Last date for individual class withdrawal (with W grades) - No Refund
1/31/14 (b) Last date for 50% tuition refund (total withdrawal only) with W grades
3/6/14 (b) Last date for 25% tuition refund (total withdrawal only) with W grades
4/21/14 (b) Last date for total withdrawal from term (with W grades) - No Refund
1/15/14 Last date to declare pass/fail grading option or select to audit a course
4/21/14 Last date to remove pass/fail grading option and receive letter grade

**More University Mandated Information**

Completion of this course fulfills a requirement in the Knowledge of the Disciplines/Social Sciences:

In Knowledge of the Disciplines courses, students will
- Acquire introductory knowledge about the discipline.
- Develop questions for inquiry that reflect an understanding of the discipline(s) in which they are asked.
- Learn how knowledge is developed and disseminated in particular disciplines.

In Social Science courses, students will
- Acquire an understanding of social science methods and of how they are used to engage in the systematic study of society and culture.
- Understand and compare formal and informal social and political structures, organizations, and institutions.

Explore and understand power relationships and the impact of social change on different groups and on society in general Closed for summer.

- Develop an appreciation of different interpretations of contemporary issues, institutions, or structures.
- Use social science methods and content to interpret and analyze data and reports in the media and to make informed decisions regarding local, national, and international issues.
- Use basic social scientific research techniques to examine and present information in a clear and concise manner.
- Understand the relation between qualitative and quantitative research.

These objectives will be addressed through our examination of the historical and constitutional context of American government, the evolving nature of civil liberties and civil rights, the mobilization of political participation by interest groups and political parties, the behavior of individuals in the political arena, the measurement of public opinion, the role of the media, the power and procedures of national governmental institutions and agencies, and an assessment of the processes by which domestic and foreign policy is made.

Note this statement from the university administration:

Academic dishonesty, including all forms of cheating, falsification, and/or plagiarism, will not be tolerated in this course. Penalties for an act of academic dishonesty may range from receiving a failing grade for a particular assignment to receiving a failing grade for the entire course. Students also may be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Services for discipline that can result in either a suspension or permanent dismissal. The Student Conduct Code details definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty, but if you are not sure about whether something you are doing would be considered an act of academic dishonesty, consult with the course instructor.
And Finally, Still More University Material

EMU Writing Support

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
115 Halle Library
(734)487-0694
http://www.emich.edu/uwc/

The University Writing Center (115 Halle Library; 487-0694) offers one-to-one writing consulting for both undergraduate and graduate students. For more information about our hours and services, and days (e.g., holidays) visit the UWC web site: http://www.emich.edu/uwc/.