

Course Information

Course Location	Meeting Days	Time
Online	Tuesday & Thursday	2:00-3:15pm

Instructor Information

Instructor	E-Mail	Office Location	Hours
Dr. Jason S. Byers	jason.byers@uconn.edu	SSH 433	10 - 11 TTH

TA Information

TA	E-Mail	Office Location	Hours
Micah Press	micah.press@uconn.edu	SSH 419	12 - 1 W

Syllabus

Course Home

Everything you need for this class (announcements, resources, assignments and other activities) will be posted on HuskyCT. Please plan to check the page regularly. This is an online course. Therefore, you need to make sure that you are checking HuskyCT on a regular basis.

Course Description

This is a course about the interaction between the central policymaking institutions in the United States – Congress and the American presidency. Primarily, this course will focus on the institutional and conceptual development of the relationship between these institutions over time. Topics will include separation and delegation of powers; elections and responsiveness; representation, policy-making processes over foreign, economic, and domestic issues; and legislative-executive interaction in an era of polarization.

Learning Outcomes

Together, we will strive for your individual and collective success in achieving the learning outcomes of this course. At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- To better understand and evaluate the nature of American democracy and the political forces that affect the political system
- Describe prominent concepts, theories, positions, and problems at stake in the study and practice of legislative and executive politics.
- Demonstrate an appreciation for:
 - The role of Congress and the president in lawmaking and society.
 - The goals and constraints shaping legislative and executive behavior.
 - The legislative process, its logic, and the potential implications of reforms.
 - The value of information and the importance of agenda setting in policymaking.

Course Materials

To maximize access to this class, we will use some textbooks, videos, and other resources, with a focus on the following:

- Primary Text (TUSC): Adler, E. Scott, Jeffrey A. Jenkins, and Charles R. Shipan. 2021. [The United States Congress](#). 2nd Edition. W. W. Norton & Company. This textbook is available for purchase in the bookstore, but students are welcome to purchase the book elsewhere.
- Primary Text (PLPP): Edwards III, George C., Kenneth R. Mayer, and Stephen J. Wayne. 2022. [Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making](#). 12th Edition. Rowman & Littlefield. This textbook is available for purchase in the bookstore, but students are welcome to purchase the book elsewhere.

University Policies

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486- 2020 or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate amorous relationships can undermine the University's mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discriminatory and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate amorous relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. Additionally, to protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report sexual assaults, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking involving a student that they witness or are told about to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. More information is available at equity.uconn.edu and titleix.uconn.edu.

Absences from Class Due to Religious Observances and Extra-Curricular Activities

Faculty and instructors are expected to reasonably accommodate individual religious practices unless doing so would result in fundamental alteration of class objectives or undue hardship to the University's legitimate business purposes. Such accommodations may include rescheduling an exam or giving a make-up exam, allowing a presentation to be made on a different date or assigning the student appropriate make-up work that is intrinsically no more difficult than the original assignment. Faculty and instructors are strongly encouraged to allow students to complete work missed due to participation in extra-curricular activities that enrich their experience, support their scholarly development, and benefit the university community. Examples include participation in scholarly presentations, performing arts, and intercollegiate sports, when the participation is at the request of, or coordinated by, a University official. Students should be encouraged to review the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester for potential conflicts and promptly notify their instructor of any anticipated accommodation needs. Students are responsible for making arrangements in advance to make up missed work. For conflicts with final examinations, students should contact the Dean of Students Office.

Office of Emergency Management on Emergency Preparedness

In case of inclement weather, a natural disaster, or a campus emergency, the University communicates through email and text message. Students are encouraged to sign up for alerts through <http://alert.uconn.edu>. Students should be aware of emergency procedures, and further information is available through the Office of Emergency Management at <http://publicsafety.uconn.edu/emergency/>.

Course Organization

Modes of learning in this class (whether assessed directly or indirectly) require a range of skills and abilities. Every student's success is important to me, and I am happy to work with you to develop strategies for success in this class.

- Reading Quizzes** (10 points). There will be five reading quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will be posted on HuskyCT.
- Exam** (40 Points). There will be two exams to assess your mastery of the material covered in the course. The exams will take place during class and will be completed individually.
- Legislative Process Analysis** (50 points). In order to demonstrate an understanding of the policy-making process that occurs as a product of the relationship between the legislative and executive branches, students are required to complete a paper analyzing the consideration and passage of a major piece of American legislation. This paper will be 5-8 pages and will contain the following sections:
 - A one-page **Topic** section detailing the broader issue the student will be analyzing. This section should include a broad discussion of the policy area, paying close attention to the topic's importance and relevance. This section is due on **Friday, February 9** at 5pm. (5 points)
 - A one to two-page **Background** section. This will necessitate contextualizing the political climate the legislation was considered in and providing a brief history of the policy. Ideally, it will demonstrate why the legislation was needed. This section is due on **Friday, February 22** at 5pm. (10 Points)
 - A one to two-page **Member Spotlight** section. This section will provide a discussion detailing a member of Congress associated with the passage of the law. It can include either a broad overview of a member's career and/or an interesting episode they were involved in. Additionally, this section needs to include information on the president's position for the bill. Students are encouraged to focus on whatever details they feel are most interesting. This section is due on **Friday, March 7** at 5pm. (10 Points)
 - A one-page **Process** section that analyzes committee and floor consideration of the measure during the legislative process. This may involve House or Senate consideration of the bill and will likely necessitate the discussion of a given rule or legislative procedure. It will also likely necessitate analyzing a roll call vote. This section is due on **Friday, March 29** at 5pm. (5 Points)
 - A one to two-page **Aftermath** section that analyzes a post-enactment event related to the bill. This might include the law being amended by a subsequent piece of legislation, being altered by a series of Supreme Court decisions or its enforcement by the President and bureaucracy. This section is due on **Friday, April 12** at 5pm. (10 Points)
 - A **Final Paper** that combines the **Background**, **Member Spotlight**, **Process**, and **Aftermath** sections. The **Final Paper** should also include a brief, three-paragraph summary detailing the legislation and issue the student will be analyzing. Specifically, the summary section should do three things: Paragraph 1: Tell the reader what the law does/sought to do; Paragraph 2: Tell the reader why both the underlying issue and law are (or are not) considered important today; Paragraph 3: Characterize its passage. Was it controversial? Partisan? What were the key votes/moments that occurred during consideration? The final paper should incorporate any instructor comments and is due on **Friday, April 26** at 5pm. (10 Points)
 - Each of the sections mentioned above should be clearly labelled, written in Times New Roman 12-point font (main text) and Times News Roman 10-point font (footnotes). It should be single-spaced and include a references section.

Grading

Category	Points
Quizzes	10 Points
Exam 1	20 Points
Exam 2	20 Points
Legislative Process Analysis	50 Points

Your grade will be determined according to the following system:

Grade	Points
A	94 or above
A-	90 - 93
B+	87 - 89
B	84 - 86
B-	80 - 83
C+	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C-	70 - 73
D+	67 - 69
D	64 - 66
D-	60 - 63
F	0 - 59

Schedule

A tentative class schedule of topics, readings and due dates is available below. Minor adjustments will be made as needed, on the course web page. Please double check the web page before doing each reading assignment.

Week 1

Topics

- The Federalist Papers
- Constitutional Foundations of the Executive and Legislative Branches

Date Readings

1/16 [Federalist 51](#)
[Federalist 10](#)
[The US Constitution](#)

1/18 [Federalist 52](#)
[Federalist 62](#)
[Federalist 69](#)

Assignments

- Review Syllabus

Week 2

Topics

- Congressional Elections

Date Readings

1/23 [TUSC Chapter 3](#)

1/25 [TUSC Chapter 3](#)

Assignment

- Submit your list (at least 4) of major bills for the **Legislative Process Analysis** paper DUE Thursday at 5pm (est)

Week 3

Topics

- Congressional Representation

Date Readings

1/30 [TUSC Chapter 4](#)

2/1 [TUSC Chapter 4](#)

Assignments

- Reading Quiz 1 DUE Friday by 5pm (est)

Week 4

Topics

- Committees

Date Readings

2/6 [TUSC Chapter 5](#)

2/8 [TUSC Chapter 5](#)

Assignments

- Topic section DUE Friday at 5pm (est)

Week 5

Topics

- Parties in Congress

Date Readings

2/13 [TUSC Chapter 6](#)

2/15 [TUSC Chapter 6](#)

Assignments

- Reading Quiz 2 DUE Friday by 5pm (est)

Week 6

Topics

- The Legislative Process

Date Readings

2/20 [TUSC Chapter 7](#)

2/22 [TUSC Chapter 7](#)

Assignments

- Background section DUE Friday at 5pm (est)

Week 7

Topics

- Congress and the President

Date Readings

2/27 [TUSC Chapter 9](#)

2/29 [TUSC Chapter 9](#)

Assignments

- Reading Quiz 3 DUE Friday by 5pm (est)

Week 8

Topics

- Exam 1

Date Readings

3/5 Exam 1

3/7 Exam 1

Assignments

- Exam 1 DUE Friday at 5pm (est)
- Member Spotlight section DUE Friday at 5pm (est)

Week 9

Topics

- Spring Break

Date Readings

3/12 Spring Break (No Class)

3/14 Spring Break (No Class)

Week 10

Topics

- Presidential Elections

Date Readings

3/19 [PLPP Chapter 3](#)

3/21 [PLPP Chapter 4](#)

Assignments

- Reading Quiz 4 DUE Friday by 5pm (est)

Week 11

Topics

- Presidents and the Public

Date Readings

3/26 [PLPP Chapter 5](#)

3/28 [PLPP Chapter 6](#)

Assignments

- Process section DUE Friday at 5pm (est)

Week 12

Topics

- Presidential Power

Date Readings

4/2 [PLPP Chapter 2](#)

4/4 [PLPP Chapter 2](#)

Assignments

- Reading Quiz 5 DUE Friday by 5pm (est)

Week 13

Topics

- The Presidency

Date Readings

4/9 [PLPP Chapter 8](#)

4/11 [PLPP Chapter 8](#)

Assignments

- Aftermath section DUE Friday at 5pm (est)

Week 14

Topics

- The President and Congress

Date Readings

4/16 [PLPP Chapter 11](#)

4/18 [PLPP Chapter 11](#)

Assignments

Exam 2

Date Readings

4/23 Exam 2

4/25 Exam 2

Assignments

- Exam 2 DUE Friday at 5pm (est)
- Final Paper Due Friday at 5pm (est)