

SYLLABUS
PLSC 379: The Legislative Process
Fall 2021

MWF 1:30 pm – 2:20 pm
Mundelein 307

Instructor

Dr. Eric Hansen

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Office Location: Coffey Hall 326B

Office Hours: MWF 12:15 pm – 1:15 pm, or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course provides an overview of legislative representation and lawmaking institutions in the United States, with a primary focus on Congress. The course is organized in three units. The first unit introduces the “electoral connection” and probes how electoral institutions affect who wins office and how members behave. The second unit explores the inner workings of Congress through an examination of parties, lawmaking procedure, and Congressional relations with the executive and judicial branches. The third unit provides a broader view of the legislative process through a comparison of lawmaking in Congress and the 50 state legislatures.

By completing this course, students should be able to:

- 1) Evaluate the role of Congress and state legislatures in U.S. politics
- 2) Understand the factors producing legislative election results
- 3) Explain the procedures by which laws are made in the U.S.
- 4) Think critically about lawmakers’ actions, tactics, and constraints in the legislative process
- 5) Develop further skills in articulating their thoughts through speaking and writing

Required Text

Mayhew, David R. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Yale University Press.

Recommended Text

Davidson, Roger H., Walter J. Oleszek, Frances E. Lee, and Eric Schickler. 2019. *Congress and Its Members*. 17th Ed. CQ Press.

Supplementary Texts [Excerpts assigned for class reading will be posted on Sakai.]

Boatright, Robert G. 2014. *Congressional Primary Elections*. New York: Routledge.

Carnes, Nicholas. 2018. *The Cash Ceiling: Why Only the Rich Run for Office and What We Can Do About It*. Princeton University Press.

- Collins, Paul M., and Lori A. Ringhand. 2013. *Supreme Court Confirmation Hearings and Constitutional Change*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lawless, Jennifer L., and Richard L. Fox. 2005. *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mooney, Christopher. 2020. *The Study of US State Policy Diffusion: What Hath Walker Wrought?* New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Squire, Peverill, and Gary Moncrief. 2015. *State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Levine, Bertram J. 2009. *The Art of Lobbying*. Sage.
- Lee, Frances E. 2016. *Insecure Majorities: Congress and the Perpetual Campaign*. University of Chicago Press.
- Theriault, Sean M. 2008. *Party Polarization in Congress*. Cambridge University Press.

Grades

Final grades for the course will be based on the following scale. I reserve the right to make adjustments to individual grades based on overall performance in the course and/or extenuating circumstances.

Letter Grade	Percentage Score
A	93-100
A-	90-92.99
B+	87-89.99
B	83-86.99
B-	80-82.99
C+	77-79.99
C	73-76.99
C-	70-72.99
D+	67-69.99
D	60-66.99
F	59.99 or below

The proportion of each assignment as part of your overall grade is as follows:

- Reading Quizzes: 15%
- Writing Assignment 1: 15%
- Writing Assignment 2: 15%
- Unit Quiz 1: 15%

Unit Quiz 2: 15%
Simulation Participation: 5%
Final Exam: 20%

Reading Quizzes

Students will be given six pop quizzes throughout the semester to assess their understanding of the assigned reading for the day. All assigned readings must be completed by the beginning of the class period on the day listed on the reading calendar below. Questions will assess students' comprehension of the major themes of the assigned readings. Students will NOT be asked about the recommended textbook readings, only the required reading. At the end of the semester, I will drop each student's lowest reading quiz grade from the calculation of the overall course grade.

All quizzes must be completed in class. No makeup quizzes will be given unless I receive written communication from another university official (e.g. dean, athletics official) requesting me to excuse an absence. I do not request or accept doctors' notes. I understand students must sometimes miss class for reasons outside their control, which is why I drop the lowest quiz grade.

A Note on Punctuality

I will begin class promptly at our designated meeting time, and reading quizzes will usually be given at the beginning of class. Students should arrive five minutes before class begins in order to find a seat and prepare their materials before class starts. Getting to class ahead of time is also a courtesy to other students, who may become distracted by late arrivers. Students who must routinely arrive late due to circumstances outside their control (for example, a class immediately before mine on the opposite side of campus) should inform me at the beginning of the semester.

Writing Assignments

Students will complete two writing assignments in the semester, each connected to the simulation and worth 15% of the course grade. The first assignment will ask students to identify the electoral incentives of a Congressional candidate running in a randomly assigned House district or state. (Students will later play the role of this same candidate in the simulation.) The second assignment will ask students to reflect on their achievements and shortcomings during the simulation.

Simulation Participation

Worth 5% of the course grade, students will be assessed on their attendance, active participation, and (to a lesser extent) effectiveness in the simulation.

Unit Quizzes

After the first and second units of the course, students will be assessed on their retention of key terms and concepts. Each quiz is worth 15% of the final course grade. Quizzes will be administered online through Sakai. While students may take the quizzes remotely, they must complete them within the regularly scheduled class period. Quizzes will contain a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Final Exam

The final exam will be worth 20% of the final course grade. The final is cumulative and will be designed to assess students' ability to connect concepts introduced throughout the course and think holistically about the legislative process. It will contain a mixture of short answer and essay questions, though the focus will be on the essays. I will not offer the final exam at any time besides the time listed below unless the student has petitioned the dean's office for a change in exam time.

Communication, Office Hours, Question about Grades

Please direct all communication with me outside class or office hours through my campus email account, which can be found in the header of this syllabus. I check my campus email account several times daily and will try to reply to student emails as quickly as possible. That being said, students should not necessarily expect me to reply immediately to emails sent to me at the last minute. I may not be able to reply to questions about course material the morning of an exam or provide resources for an assignment the night before it is to be turned in.

My office hours exist solely for you to visit me with questions about this class. If you can't make those times, email me to schedule a more convenient appointment time. Email is only for brief communications. If you have long and complicated questions, come to my office hours. I will not send grades over email—check Sakai for the latest updates. After I have graded and returned your assignments, there is a 24-hour moratorium before I will answer questions about that assignment.

Technology Use

I will not allow the use of computers, tablets, or other electronic devices during class. There may be some days when I will ask you to bring a computer with you (if there is an online activity, for example). Most of class time will involve lecture or discussion of articles and concepts related to the course—this can be accomplished without computers.

The use of cell phones or other mobile communication devices is strictly prohibited during class, except in the event of an emergency. Cell phones minimally should be put on silent but preferably should be turned off. Students discovered using their phones during class time will be asked to turn off their phones and place them out of reach.

Student Accessibility

Loyola University provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with Students Accessibility Center (SAC), located in Sullivan Center, Suite 117. Students should provide me with an accommodation notification from SAC, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with me individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. For more information or further assistance, please call (773) 508-3700 or visit <http://www.luc.edu/sac>.

Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for adhering to university policy on academic honesty by avoiding acts of plagiarism or cheating. Students can find more information about what constitutes plagiarism

at the Writing Center’s website: (<http://www.luc.edu/writing/studentresources/onlineresources>). Consult the College of Arts and Sciences’ statement to learn more about college policy: (<http://www.luc.edu/cas/advising/academicintegritystatement>). I reserve the right to exercise case-by-case discretion in assigning penalties for acts of academic dishonesty. Generally speaking, however, students should expect to receive a score of “0” on any assignment or exam where they are observed plagiarizing, cheating, or passing off someone else’s ideas as their own. If more than one instance occurs during the semester, offending students should expect to fail my course. I report all acts of academic dishonesty to the Dean of College of Arts and Science’s office.

Readings

Students are expected to complete daily reading assignments in preparation for class. Students should read carefully and be ready to discuss the material, as discussions based around these readings will form the basis of the participation grade. I reserve the right to make changes to the reading list and will inform students well in advance of any changes.

All reading assignments are to be completed by the beginning of class on the day the assignment is listed. Assigned readings in normal typeface in the calendar are required for the day. Textbook readings (in *italics*) are considered *recommended* for that day. In-class lectures will draw heavily from the textbook material; students may find it in their interest to read the textbook ahead of time to supplement their understanding of lecture material. Students are responsible for understanding the material from the textbooks for the midterm and final exams, though textbook readings will never be the subject of an in-class reading quiz.

All reading assignments are to be completed by the beginning of class on the day the assignment is listed. Students are responsible for obtaining their own copies of the Mayhew book and the Davidson, Oleszek, Lee and Schickler textbook (abbreviated DOLS below). A copy of the textbook has been ordered for Course Reserves at Cudahy Library. All other articles/chapters will be posted on Sakai. Students may not share course materials with others outside of the class without my written permission.

Week of...	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
August 30 Introduction + Foundations	Syllabus <i>DOLS Ch. 1</i>	Article 1 of U.S. Constitution	Polsby <i>DOLS Ch. 2</i>
September 6 Electoral Connection	<i>No class – Labor Day</i>	Mayhew Pt. 1	Mayhew Pt. 2
September 13 Candidates & Campaigns	Lawless & Fox Carnes <i>DOLS Ch. 3</i>	Biersack M. Petersen	A.H. Petersen
September 20 Elections	Wasserman <i>DOLS Ch. 4</i>	Smith, Note 6 Bacon	Boatright Ch. 3
September 27 Representation	Minta & Sinclair- Chapman <i>DOLS Ch. 5</i>	Miler	Unit 1 Quiz (online)

October 4 Parties & Leadership	Theriault <i>DOLS Ch. 6</i>	Lee	Curry & Lee
October 11 Committees	<i>No class – Fall Break</i>	Fenno <i>DOLS Ch. 7</i>	Smith, Notes 2 & 22 Paper 1 Due
October 18 Lobbying & Appropriations	Levine <i>DOLS Ch. 13-14</i>	Smith, Note 7	Smith, Note 11
October 25 Procedure & Decision Making	Smith, Note 12 Crowley <i>DOLS Ch. 8</i>	Binder	Kingdon <i>DOLS Ch. 9</i>
November 1 Simulation	<i>No assigned reading for simulation weeks. Follow daily instructions in class. Come prepared to advocate for your constituents' interests.</i>		
November 8 Simulation			
November 15 Interbranch Relations	Smith, Note 28 <i>DOLS Ch. 10-12</i>	Smith, Note 27	Collins & Ringhand
November 22	Unit 2 Quiz (online) Paper 2 due	<i>No class - Thanksgiving</i>	
November 29 State Legislatures	Squire & Moncrief 1	Rogers	Squire & Moncrief 4
December 6 State Legislatures	Bowser & Moncrief	Mooney	<i>DOLS Ch. 16</i>
Final Exam – Friday, December 17, 9:00 am			

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. If changes are made, students will be informed through email and verbally in class, and a new syllabus document will be posted on Sakai.