

**POLS 214: Executive and Legislative Politics (Section: 001)**  
**Spring 2018: MWF 11-11:53 a.m., MOLN 112**  
**Department of Politics, Philosophy, and Law**  
**University of Wisconsin-Parkside**

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**Course Description**

In theory, the executive and legislative branches of the federal government are supposed to be co-equal partners, with separation of powers, and checks and balances functioning to limit the power of each branch. However, this concept is simplistic in that it fails to take account the historical evolution of each branch of government and their effective power throughout American history. This course also studies the executive branch as an institution rather than through the lens of one person – the president. We look at the nomination and campaign process, presidential behavior in enacting policy, and how the institution of the presidency has changed since 1789, when George Washington was inaugurated. In studying the legislative branch, we will study how the congressional organization and rules affects policymaking, as well as how money affects the process.

**Course Objectives**

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and explain how the executive and legislative branches affect policy.
2. Explain how the institutions of the presidency and congress constrain action.
3. Understand the lawmaking process
4. Understand the role of campaigns and elections are regarding why the president and members of Congress make the decisions they do.

**Prerequisites:** POLS 100.

**Required Texts**

Dodd, Lawrence C., and Bruce I. Oppenheimer, eds. 2017. *Congress Reconsidered*. 11<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington: CQ Press. ISBN 978-1-5063-2878-2. **Required**

Nelson, Michael, ed. 2014. *The Presidency and the Political System*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-4522-4043-5 **Required**

These textbooks are available at the University Bookstore as well as online retailers (e.g., amazon.com, barnesandnobles.com, half.com, etc.). It is also available as an e-book.

The university offers a free digital subscription to the New York Times for as long as you are a student. You have to re-register every year, but it is a great way to know what is going on in the world. Visit <http://libguides.uwp.edu/nytimes> and follow the instructions. As a student, you can also receive a discounted subscription to the Wall Street Journal. A 15-week subscription is only \$15 (\$1 per week). Visit <http://r.wsj.net/j8worm> to sign up.

### **Student Responsibilities**

Please come to class prepared. This means you need to **read** and **take notes** on the assigned readings beforehand. Attending class and participating is important, as there will be material discussed only in lectures that will be tested on exams and quizzes. We will be discussing controversial issues throughout the semester, with some of you holding passionate opinions on these issues. Please treat your fellow classmates with respect. We, each, come to this course with diverse backgrounds and different ideas regarding various issues and how government should work. Please respect your classmates by not talking or interrupting when I or others are speaking. Late work **will be** penalized by a full grade deduction for each day assignments are not turned in. Exceptions **will not** be made to this policy.

### **Instructor Responsibilities**

As part of being your instructor, I have responsibilities to you. I will help answer questions regarding the course, and help you understand the material. I will be available during office hours and also available by appointment if you cannot make office hours. I will also try to answer questions via email within 48 hours (does not include weekends). All questions regarding grades must be asked in person, either after class or during office hours.

I also aim to provide clear guidelines as to what is expected. I will be using D2L to communicate and post grades. Please check your campus email and D2L regularly to make sure you can view course announcements and review your grades as the semester progresses.

### **Grading**

Exams: 40% (Two at 20% each)  
Presidential briefing memo: 15%  
Representative tracking: 15%  
Co-sponsor memo: 15%  
Participation: 15%

**Final grade scale:** A = 94% and above, A- = 90%-93%, B+ = 87%-89%, B = 83%-86%, B- = 80%-82%, C+ = 77%-79%, C = 73%-76%, C- = 70%-72%, D+ = 67%-69%, D = 60%-66%, F = 59% and below (Note: I do not round up final grades if you are just below the cutoff, such as having a 93.8%. I have to define the scale at some point, and some people are always going to fall on the other side of the divide).

*Exams (Two at 20% each):* Two exams will be given during the course. The first exam will cover the executive branch and the second will cover the legislative branch. Exams will be long-format essay and given in class. Exams may be made-up if you have an approved excuse or an emergency. Absences related to academic workload, illness, work schedule, car problems, etc. If you have an emergency that causes you to miss an exam, you must contact me as soon as possible (within 24 hours unless there is a **valid** reason why you could not contact me sooner) to arrange a make-up exam that will be given in an alternative format from the exam taken in class

*Presidential briefing memo (15%):* You will play the role of a presidential staffer tasked to write a briefing of an issue that either the executive or legislative branches are currently working on. Memos will be between 1,500-1,600 words. Please submit a one-paragraph proposal for your topic by the start of class on Friday, February 9, via Dropbox on D2L. Memos are due by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, March 12, via Dropbox.

*Co-sponsor memo (15%):* You will play the role of a legislative staffer tasked to write a memo to a member of Congress you are covering for the tracking portion of the course outlining the reasons the member of Congress should co-sponsor the legislation. You will need to find an actual bill that has been filed in the past six months and determine how the bill fits the interests of the member of Congress you have chosen to track. You will need to consider how the bill affects the member of Congress' chances of re-election, how it affects the member's standing within his or her party, and how it affects the people of the district. Memos will be between 1,500-1,600 words. Please submit a one-paragraph proposal for your topic that includes the number and title of your proposed bill by the start of class on Friday, April 6, via Dropbox on D2L. Memos are due by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9, via Dropbox.

*Representative tracking (15%):* During this course, you will keep track of a rank-and-file member of the House of Representatives you will pick during the first week of class. Email me your top three picks no later than start of class Friday, February 2, and include some names that are not in Wisconsin or northern Illinois so you get a better chance of picking someone you are interested in. Assigned representatives will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis. Press clips will include media coverage of your assigned member of the House of Representatives, as well as news the member has published through their office or social media accounts. By 5 p.m. each Friday, starting during the second week of class, you will submit a 200-250-word summary of media coverage and other news of what your chosen House member has done through the week on a discussion board set up on D2L.

*Participation (15%):* Participation is an important component of learning. It is not enough to merely show up and listen to me talk. Here are a few things I look for that count for participation: asking questions; answering other students' questions; and making comments relevant to the discussion using the readings, other sources, and personal experiences. You do not have to agree what I say or what your classmates have said, but I do ask that we are respectful of each other's opinions. Behaviors that lead to lower participation scores are: not listening, texting or surfing the Internet, side conversations, speaking without being recognized, and making fun of comments from others. One thing I do want to ask you is please email me if you prefer to volunteer or be called on. If you do not email me, I will be calling on you in class. As part of participation, you are asked to keep track of your participation with a list of dates that

you participated and how you participated. You will need to email me sometime during Week 7 and during Week 13 regarding your participation. You are welcome to suggest a participation grade you think you earned and I will provide feedback. I also reserve the right to ask for notes to be emailed to me before class to earn participation points if I discern that many of you are not reading the assigned articles.

Participation is contingent on attendance, because you cannot participate if you are not in class. Absences related to your academic workload, illness, work schedule, car problems, etc. are not usually excused absences. Excused absences generally are for university-sponsored events such as athletics, performing arts, or other special events held during class time. Events related to student organizations are not excused unless attending a conference. You are allowed up to three absences during the course. After four unexcused absences, you will only receive 80 percent of your participation grade. Every absence after that is another 5 percent off your participation grade for each absence. If you miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining the missed material (e.g., notes) from another student, as my notes/PowerPoint slides will not be made available.

**Grading notes:** Proper spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure will be part of your research paper grade. Students need to develop the ability to write clearly and in common political science style that includes a research question, literature review, methodology, and results section, as well as a conclusion. Students are expected to carefully read, edit, and proofread their written work. If English is not your native language, or even if it is and you would like further assistance, there are on-campus resources that are there to help you. The university offers assistance in various subjects through the Parkside Academic Resource Center (PARC). Assistance is free and is available in Wylie D180. If you need help with this course, please make an appointment. Help with writing assignments is available on a walk-in basis. Visit the PARC in-person or online at <https://www.uwp.edu/learn/academicsupport/parc/> for hours and more information.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Use of the intellectual property of others without attributing it to them is considered a serious academic offense, and I will generally fail students from the course for academic misconduct. It can also lead to a disciplinary hearing where sanctions can suspension or expulsion from the university. The University of Wisconsin-Parkside's policy on academic misconduct can be found at <https://www.uwp.edu/live/offices/studentaffairs/upload/14.pdf>.

### **Student Accessibility**

Students with disabilities will be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me the beginning of the semester with a copy of your accommodation letter so I can make the needed accommodations. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility and receive an accommodation letter from Disability Services. Please visit <https://www.uwp.edu/live/offices/disabilityservices/> for more information.

## **Registration Requirement**

The official registration deadline to add this course without a permission number is Friday, February 2. The deadline to add the course with a permission number is Friday, February 9. Course drops must be completed by Friday, February 23, to not receive a Grade “W”, and the last day to withdraw with a Grade “W” is Friday, March 16. Please refer to the university’s policies regarding pro-rated tuition refund dates. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Please confirm enrollment in Solar. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the posted deadlines.

## **Class Schedule**

Readings will come from the textbooks and articles available through searching the University of Wisconsin-Parkside Library website. You should be prepared to discuss the assigned reading on the day listed below. I may make changes to the schedule as needed.

### **Week 1 – Introduction, Approaches to the Presidency (Jan. 29, 31, and Feb. 2)**

#### **Readings:**

- Jeffrey K. Tulis, “The Two Constitutional Presidencies,” in Nelson, 1-32.
- Lyn Ragsdale, “Studying the Presidency: Why Presidents Need Social Scientists,” in Nelson, 33-65.
- Richard Fleisher et al. 2000. “The Demise of the Two Presidencies.” *American Politics Quarterly* 28 (1): 3-25.
- Federalist Papers 68-77.

### **Week 2 – Presidential Power (Feb. 5, 7, and 9)**

#### **Readings:**

- Stephen Skowronek, “Presidential Leadership in Political Time,” in Nelson, 66-94.
- Marc Landy and Sidney M. Milkis, “The Presidency in History: Leading from the Eye of the Storm,” in Nelson, 95-133.
- Paul J. Quirk, “Presidential Competence,” in Nelson, 134-166.
- Michael Nelson, “The Psychological Presidency,” in Nelson, 167-190.
- Kenneth R. Meyer. 1999. “Executive Orders and Presidential Power” *Journal of Politics* 61(2): 445-66
- Terry Moe and William G. Howell. 1999. “Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 29 (4): 850-873.

### **Week 3 – Presidential Selection (Feb. 12, 14, and 16)**

#### **Readings:**

- Lara M. Brown, “The Presidency and the Nominating Process: Aspirants, Parties, and Selections,” in Nelson, 191-213.
- George C. Edwards III, “The Faulty Premises of the Electoral College,” in Nelson, 214-230.

- Randall E. Adkins and Andrew J. Dowdle. 2001. "How Important Are Iowa and New Hampshire to Winning Post-Reform Presidential Nominations?" *Political Research Quarterly* 54 (2): 431-44.
- Loren Collingwood, Matt A Barreto, and Todd Donovan. 2012. "Early Primaries, Viability and Changing Preferences for Presidential Candidates," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42 (2): 231-255.
- Gary R. Jacobsen. 2016. "Polarization, Gridlock, and Presidential Campaign Politics in 2016," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 667(1): 226-246.
- Todd Donovan and Rob Hunsaker. 2009. "Beyond Expectations: Effects of Early Elections in U.S. Presidential Nomination Contests." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 42 (1): 45-52.
- Wayne P. Steger, 2007. "Who Wins Nominations and Why," *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (1): 91-99.

#### **Week 4 – Presidents and Politics (Feb. 19, 21, and 23)**

##### **Readings:**

- Bruce Miroff, "The Presidential Spectacle," in Nelson, 231-254.
- Elvin T. Lim, "The Presidency and the Media: Two Faces of Bureaucracy," in Nelson, 258-271
- Daniel J. Tichenor, "The Presidency and Interest Groups: Allies, Adversaries, and Policy Leadership," in Nelson, 272-303.
- Sidney M. Milkis, "The Presidency and Political Parties," in Nelson, 304-348.
- Jeffrey E. Cohen, 1995. "Presidential Rhetoric and the Political Agenda." *American Journal of Political Science* 39 (1): 87-107.
- Brian F. Harrison. 2016. "Bully Partisan or Partisan Bully?: Partisanship, Elite Polarization, and U.S. Presidential Communication." *Social Science Quarterly* 97 (2): 418–438.
- Samuel Kernell and Laure L. Rice. 2011. "Cable and the Partisan Polarization of the President's Audience." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41 (4): 693-711.

#### **Week 5 – Presidents and Government (Feb. 26, 28, and Mar. 2)**

- John Burke, "The Institutional Presidency," in Nelson, 349-373.
- David E. Lewis and Terry Moe, "The President and the Bureaucracy: The Levers of Presidential Control," in Nelson, 374-405.
- Matthew Dickinson, "The President and Congress," in Nelson, 406-447.
- David Yalof, "The Presidency and the Judiciary," in Nelson, 448-473.
- Andrew Rudalevige, "The President and Unilateral Power: A Taxonomy," in Nelson, 473-499.
- Richard Fleisher and Jon R. Bond. 1996. "The President in a More Partisan Legislative Arena," *Political Research Quarterly*. 49 (4): 729-748.

#### **Week 6 – Presidents and Public Policy (Mar. 5, 7, and 9)**

##### **Readings:**

- Roger B. Porter, "The Three Presidencies: Power and Policy," in Nelson, 500-524.

- Andrew J. Polsky, “Presidency at War: The Window of Agency in Wartime Leadership,” in Nelson, 525-544.
- Marc Allen Eisner and Kenneth J. Meier, “Presidential Control versus Bureaucratic Power: Explaining the Reagan Revolution in Antitrust,” *American Journal of Political Science* 34 (1): 269-287.
- Christopher S. Kelly and Brian W. Marshall. 2010. “Going it Alone: The Politics of Signing Statements from Reagan to Bush II,” *Social Science Quarterly* 91 (1): 168-187.
- Lisa L. Martin. 2005. “The President and International Commitments: Treaties as Signaling Devices,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35 (3): 440-465.
- Elena Kagan. 2001. “Presidential Administration,” *Harvard Law Review* 114 (8): 2245-2385.

### **Week 7 – Congress and Presidential Relations, Midterm exam (Mar. 12, 14, and 16)**

#### **Readings:**

- Andrew W. Barrett and Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha. 2007. “Presidential Success on the Substance of Legislation,” *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (1): 100-112.
- Joseph F. Zimmerman. 2007. “Congressional Preemption During the George W. Bush Administration,” *Publius* 37 (3): 432-452

#### **Important dates:**

- **Presidential briefing due (Mar. 12)**
- **Midterm review (Mar. 14)**
- **Midterm exam (Mar. 16)**

### **Week 8– Introducing Congress (Mar. 19, 21, and 23)**

#### **Readings:**

- Barbara Sinclair, “The New World of U.S. Senators,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 1-28.
- John H. Aldrich and David W. Rohde, “Lending and Reclaiming Power: Majority Leadership in the House Since the 1950,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 29-60
- John H. Aldrich and Ruth W. Grant. 1993. “The Antifederalists, the First Congress, and the First Parties.” *Journal of Politics* 55 (2): 295-326.
- Lawrence C. Dodd and Oppenheimer. 2015. “Congress in a Downsian World: Polarization Cycles and Regime Change,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 77 (2): 311-323.

### **Spring Break (No class March 26, 28, and 30)**

### **Week 9 – Congressional elections and representation (Apr. 2, 4, and 6)**

#### **Readings:**

- Robert S. Erikson and Gerald C. Wright. “Voters, Candidates and Issues in Congressional Elections,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 61-88
- Gary C. Jacobson, “Partisanship, Money, and Competition: Elections and the Transformation of Congress since the 1970s,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 89-118.
- Soren Jordan, Kim Quaille Hill, and Patricia A. Hurley, “Constituency Representation in Congress: In General and in Periods of Higher and Lower Partisan Polarization,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 119-138.

- Rodney Hero and Robert H. Preuhs, “Black-Latino Relations in Congress: Examining Institutional Context and Inter-Minority Group Relations,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 139-162.
- David Doherty. 2013. “To Whom Do People Think Representatives Should Respond: Their District or the Country?” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 77 (1): 237-55
- John Lapinski, Matt Levendusky, Ken Winneg, and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, 2016. “What Do Citizens Want from Their Member of Congress?” *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (3): 535-545

**Important dates:**

- **No class Friday, Apr. 6 (MPSA conference)**
- Number and title of bill for co-sponsor memo due (11:59 p.m. Apr. 6)

**Week 10 – Congressional Organization (Apr. 9, 11, and 13)**

**Readings:**

- Fang-Yi Chiou and Lawrence S. Rothenberg. 2003. “When Pivotal Politics Meets Partisan Politics,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (3): 503-522.
- Gary W. Cox and Matthew D. McCubbins. 2002. “Agenda Power in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1877 to 1986.” Available at <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1003328>.
- Matthew J. Lebo, Adam McGlynn and Gregory Koger. 2007. “Strategic Party Influence in Congress, 1789-2000.” *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (3): 464-481.
- Jeffery Lazarus and Nathan W. Monroe. 2007. “The Speaker's Discretion.” *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (4): 593-606.
- David W. Rohde. 2013. “Reflections on the Practice of Theorizing: Conditional Party Government in the Twenty-First Century.” *The Journal of Politics*, 75(4): 849-864.
- Kenneth A. Shepsle and Barry R. Weingast. 1994. “Positive Theories of Congressional Institutions,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 19 (2): 149-179.

**Week 11 – Congressional Polarization (Apr. 16, 18, and 20)**

**Readings:**

- Steven S. Smith and Gerald Gamm, “Dynamics of Party Government in Congress,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 163-188.
- Sarah Binder, “Legislating in Polarized Times, in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 189-206.
- Gregory Koger, “Filibusters and Majority Rule in the Modern Senate,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 237-258.
- Larry Bartels. 2000. “Partisanship and Voting Behavior, 1952–1996.” *American Journal of Political Science* 44 (1): 35–50.
- William T. Egar, 2016. “Tarnishing Opponents, Polarizing Congress: The House Minority Party and the Construction of the Roll-Call Record.” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 41 (4): 935–964.
- Nolan McCarty, Keith Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. 2009. “Does Gerrymandering Cause Polarization?” *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (3): 666-680.

**Week 12 – Legislative Policy Process (Apr. 23, 25, and 27)**

**Readings:**

- Craig Volden and Alan E. Wiseman, “Legislative Effectiveness and Problem Solving in the U.S. House of Representatives,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 259-284.



- Bruce I. Oppenheimer, “ANWR and CAFE: Frustrating Energy Production and Conservation Initiatives in Congress over Three Decades,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 331-356.
- Peter C. Hanson, “The Endurance of Non-Partisanship in House Appropriation,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 285-310.
- Lawrence R. Jacobs. 2010. “What Health Reform Teaches Us about American Politics.” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 43 (4): 619–623.
- Gyung-Ho Jeong. 2013. “Congressional Politics of U.S. Immigration Reforms.” *Political Research Quarterly* 66 (3): 600–614.
- Sarah Binder and Forrest Maltzman, “Is Advice and Consent Broken? The Contentious Politics of Selecting Federal Judges and Justices,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 399-420.
- Wendy Martinek, Mark Kemper, and Steven R. Van Winkle. 2002. “To Advise and Consent: The Senate and Lower Federal Court Nominations, 1977-1998.” *Journal of Politics* 64 (2): 337–361.

### **Week 13 – Congress and Public Policy in Separation-of-Powers System (Apr 30, May 2 and 4)**

#### **Readings:**

- John Cooper, “The Balance of Power Between the Congress and the President: Issues and Dilemmas,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 357-398.
- Douglas L. Kriner, “Congress, Public Opinion, and the Political Costs of Waging War,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 421-450.
- Bruce I. Oppenheimer, “Congress in the Age of Trump: The 2016 National Elections and Their Aftermath,” in Dodd and Oppenheimer, 451-478.
- Dino P. Christenson and Douglas L. Kriner. 2017. “Mobilizing the Public Against the President: Congress and the Political Costs of Unilateral Action.” *American Journal of Political Science* 61 (4): 769–785.

#### **Important dates:**

- Co-sponsor memo due (11:59 p.m., May 4)

### **Week 14 –Final review and exam (May 7 and 9)**

#### **Important dates:**

- Final review (May 7)
- Final exam (10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., May 9)

## **General Grading Standards for Written Assignments**

- A – OUTSTANDING.** An "A" essay or paper is clearly written and contains no grammatical errors. It demonstrates mastery of the relevant material and offers significant insight into the topic at hand.
- B – GOOD.** A "B" essay or paper is clearly written but may contain a very few grammatical errors. It clearly relates the facts, gives sound analysis, and provides some interesting insight.
- C – MEDIOCRE.** A "C" essay or paper is clearly written but may contain some grammatical mistakes. It adequately relates the facts and offers some analysis, although it probably does not offer much insight.
- D – POOR.** A "D" essay or paper is intelligible but probably contains some serious grammatical errors. It often relates the facts poorly, offers little analysis, and provides no real insight.
- F – UNACCEPTABLE.** An "F" essay or paper is poorly written and makes no coherent argument. It struggles to relate the facts and offers little or no analysis. It often creates confusion instead of providing insight.