

Pols 43501

Dr. Randolph C. Horn
Spring 2005
RCHORN@Samford.edu
Class meetings: TR 1:00-2:50 DBH208

Legislative Process

Phone :726-2179
Office: DBH 108
Office Hours: T 3-4, W 1-2:00
& by appointment

Required Readings

Lawrence C. Dodd and Bruce J. Oppenheimer (eds.) 2005 *Congress Reconsidered 8e.*
Washington: CQ Press.

Herbert F. Weisberg, Eric S. Heberlig and Lisa M. Campoli (eds.) 1999 *Classics in Congressional Politics.* New York: Longman.

Selected reserve readings and journal articles TBA.

The *New York Times*, daily

Course Description

Almost every nation and all American states have some form of representative assembly, variously called parliaments, legislatures, houses of burgesses, etc. While, strictly speaking, not all are legislatures -- deliberative assemblies with the power to make laws -- all have a significant role in the construction or at least the legitimation of public policy. The United States' national legislature, Congress, is the most powerful and most studied assembly in the world. As the policy environment continues to shift responsibilities to the states, state legislatures are becoming more important features of the national political landscape. This course seeks to understand the ways in which deliberative assemblies operate generally, by understanding how the U. S. Congress and state legislatures operate and by comparing these legislatures with parliaments.

Course Requirements

- 1) This course is a seminar. Students must be prepared for class, completing readings before class meetings. Students are expected to participate in class discussions. No written work will be accepted after the class in which it is due.
- 2) Attendance is required. Students are allowed four absences without penalty. A fifth absence will result in an FA. Two tardies count as one absence. Absences may be excused with verifiable documentation of accident, illness, official university duties, or legal obligation.
- 3) Cheating is giving or receiving unauthorized information on graded work. Plagiarism is the presentation of another's ideas or language as your own. Both are unacceptable.
- 4) Students will be evaluated on their performance on class participation, essays, an optional significant independent research project and a comprehensive final exam.

| | Track I | Track II |
|---------------------|---------|----------|
| Class Participation | 20 | 20% |
| Short Papers | 60 | 60% |
| Final exam | 20 | |
| Optional Research | | 20% |
| total | 100 | 100% |

Grades, in ascending order:

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| greater than 60%= D- | greater than 63.3%= D | greater than 66.6%= D+ |
| greater than 70%= C | greater than 73.3%= C | greater than 76.6%= C+ |
| greater than 80%= B- | greater than 83.3%= B | greater than 86.6%= B+ |
| greater than 90%= A- | greater than 93.3%= A | |

Class participation: The seminar format requires that students take responsibility for meeting their educational goals and for helping their colleagues with the same. High class participation marks require more than attendance and skimming of the required reading. Student must be prepared to thoughtfully discuss the readings and actively and constructively contribute to the collective effort to grapple with the course material.

Short Papers: Two short papers will be due each week. The abstract and essay receiving the lowest grade will be dropped.

Due Tuesdays: Students will write short essays integrating the weekly reading and evidence from the current Congress. Short essays are due at 10:00 the morning of class. Each essay should be two-pages long. Though short, each essay represents an exercise in formal writing. Essays will be evaluated in terms of style, grammar, spelling, content, and creativity and will earn letter grades with no fractional points, i.e. A, B, C, D, F, missing=0. Late essays will receive a one-letter grade penalty if submitted before class.

Due Thursday: Students will write an abstract of a recent publication **relevant** to that week's topic. Abstracts should discuss the theory, data, and methods of the piece, explain its connection to the weekly theme, and assess the implications for contemporary politics. Submit a photocopy (or its persistent link) of the first page of the reviewed article with the abstract. Students may select articles for review from the following journals: American Journal of Political Science, American Political Science Review, American Politics Quarterly, British Journal of Political Science, Congress and the Presidency, Journal of Politics, Legislative Studies Quarterly, Political Behavior, Political Research Quarterly, Polity, Public Administration Review, Public Opinion Quarterly, Publius: The Journal of Federalism, Social Forces, Social Science Quarterly, State and Local Review, and others by permission. Using articles that are more than five years old require special permission. Abstracts are due at 10:00 the morning of class and are not to exceed one page in length. Essays will be evaluated in terms of relevance, style, grammar, spelling, content, and creativity and will earn letter grades with no fractional points, i.e. A, B, C, D, F, missing=0. Late abstracts will receive a one-letter grade penalty if submitted before class.

Final exam: The final exam is cumulative and is worth 20% of the semester grade.

Optional Independent research: Students may conduct independent research based on the scholarly literature on a topic related to the legislative process chosen in consultation with the instructor. The typical product of such research is a 10-15 page term paper .Other creative products (by permission only) are welcome as supplements to or instead of the term paper, but should be comparable scholarly achievements. A complete draft of the paper is due in class on 1 May. Students should submit a project proposal the first week of April; the proposal should include a one-page description of the project idea and a tentative bibliography, including at least 10 scholarly references.

Class Schedule

| | Tuesdays | Thursdays |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Week 1 | | 27 Jan -- Introduction |
| Week 2 | 1 Feb -- Constitution and Federalist Papers 47, 51, 53, 62 | 3 Feb-- Classics #1, Chs 2 & 3 from Arend Lijphart 1984 <i>Democracies</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press. |
| Week 3 Legislative Development | 8 Feb -- Classics Part I, first short essay due | 10 Feb -- First abstract due |
| Week 4 Congressional Change | 15 Feb – Dodd I | 17 Feb -- Abstract due |
| Week 5 Party Leadership | 22 Feb -- Classics, Part VI | 24 Feb -- Abstract due |
| Week 6 Leadership and Politics | 1 Mar – Dodd 8-10 | 3 Mar-- Abstract due |
| Week 7 Representation | 8 Mar – Classics, Part II; | 10 Mar -- Abstract due |
| Week 8 Elections I | 15 Mar -- Classics, Part III | 17 Mar -- Abstract due |
| Week 9 Spring Break | 22 Mar -- Spring Break, no class | 24 Mar -- Spring Break, no class |
| Week 10 Elections II | 29 Mar-- Dodd, Part II | 31 Mar -- Abstract due |
| Week 11 Norms and Rules | 5 Apr -- Classics, Part IV | 7 Apr -- Abstract due |
| Week 12 Committees I | 12 Apr -- Classics, Part V | 14 Apr -- Abstract due |
| Week 13 Committees II | 19 Apr – Dodd 11-12 | 21 Apr -- Abstract due |
| Week 14 Voting decisions | 26 Apr -- Classics, Part VII | 28 Apr -- Abstract due |
| Week 15 Public Policy | May 3 -- Dodd IV | 5 May -- Abstract due |
| Week 16 Plus Ca Change | May 10 Dodd V (Last Class) | |
| Final: Mon. 16 May 10:30-12:30 | | |