

Government 2010
Fall 2019; M, W 11:40-1:05
Professor Janet M. Martin
Hubbard Hall 24
207-725-3618
Email: jmartin@bowdoin.edu

Drop by Office Hours (no appointments; first-come first-served): **Wednesday 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.** Appointments for other times can be scheduled via email. To facilitate scheduling, suggest a range of times over several days. Evening and weekend appointments may be available.

U. S. CONGRESS

This course is an introduction to the United States Congress. The focus is on Congress as an institution, with an emphasis on aspects of representation.

Just as the other two constitutional branches of American government have their cycles of activity, Congress, as an institution, has its own timetable for action. Throughout the semester we will pay attention to the “schedule” of Congress, while noting differences between the House and Senate, and why and how that schedule changes since Congress is a representative body and a responsive body. Congress shares with the President some overlap in election and budgeting cycles and shares an ongoing role in the making of domestic and foreign policy. Overlap with the Supreme Court is less obvious but will become more evident as the semester progresses.

We will follow the 116th Congress for examples to better understand Congress, especially in an era of extreme partisanship. Throughout the semester attention will be given to Members and Leaders; the role of Party; presidential-congressional relations; the policy process; House and Senate differences; upcoming elections; and women as candidates, Members, and Leaders, and the impact of women in the House and Senate.

Required Readings:

Roger H. Davidson, Walter J. Oleszek, Frances E. Lee, and Eric Schickler
Congress and Its Members (17th edition)

Michele L. Swers *Women in the Club: Gender and Policy Making in the Senate*

U.S. Constitution (available at the College Store; on line)

CQ Magazine Online – Each week a new issue of CQ Magazine Online should be available electronically. Read the cover story, and articles on the Appropriations process, the legislative process (e.g., Rules in the House, filibusters in the Senate, committee hearings and votes), leadership, House and Senate relations with

President Trump, and overall stories on the 116th Congress. Website accessibility will be discussed in class. Projects and class participation will often be tied to readings in *CQ Magazine*. Chapters 15 and 16 in Davidson *et al* will provide a context for reading articles in *CQ Magazine*. Skim through Chapters 15 and 16 as you begin reading about Congress.

The New York Times, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, C-SPAN, other print and broadcast news material, the Internet, and social media. (Read and view as much as you can to gain familiarity with Congress, a complex institution.)

Optional Text:

Walter J. Oleszek, *et al*, *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process* (10th or 11th ed.) [will be placed on reserve]

Course Requirements: **

1 st Exam	30 %
2 nd Exam	25 %
Research Paper	30 %
Class Participation, especially presentations on and discussion of CQ articles. Current illustrations from C-SPAN coverage of the House and Senate (especially floor or committee action) can supplement your reading in CQ Magazine.	15 %

[At a minimum, class attendance is expected. Class participation, including presentations, must be meaningful, substantive, and analytical. For example, does your presentation of material from CQ both inform and help in explaining Congress? Does it link to material we have, or will be covering in class? Can you make a specific link to assigned readings? (You can look ahead at upcoming reading assignments, and make references to those assignments in your presentation.) Do you contribute a particularly challenging article or idea to the discussion? Are your contributions helpful to class discussion?]

Participation credit can also be earned for current C-SPAN segments of floor action or committee action in the House and/or Senate, downloaded or recorded for use in class, illustrating material covered in class. These segments can be helpful to other students in learning about Congress and may be shown in class, or shared with the class (*separate from presentations*).

COURSE OUTLINE

Approximate dates for topics and readings are listed for each section; you are expected to follow news coverage of the 116th Congress, and the relationships between members of Congress and the Trump administration. Be prepared for discussion. Readings and lectures are complementary; there may be overlap at times, but we will not go over each set of readings, and material in any set of readings may be referred to at several different points in time throughout the semester. Ask questions if any material is unclear (either in class, or in office hours, or via email.) I am glad to go over additional points in class, if I am made aware that there are questions on the material.

We will follow the actions of the 116th Congress, especially its agenda in the fall of 2019, and so by necessity you will notice brief digressions from the scheduled topics in order to introduce you to, for example, the appropriations process. Feel free to read ahead, especially as the readings relate to your CQ presentation, and to ask questions about the material covered.

Congress is a complex institution and so your immersion in the readings and the 116th Congress via CQ, and watching of C-SPAN coverage of the House and Senate, will let you more fully understand Congress by the end of the semester.

September 4 Prepare for the semester, especially subsequent reading in *CQ Magazine*, by *skimming* Davidson et al, Chapters 10, 15 and 16, and the *U.S. Constitution*, especially noting provisions in Article I. Have this reading completed by class on Monday, September 9th. In addition, locate a recent issue of *CQ Magazine* using the library's online collection of databases, and familiarize yourself with the types of news coverage of Congress available in *CQ Magazine*. If you are not familiar with the library's online databases, consult with a reference librarian who can help you locate *CQ Magazine*; I will also go over how to locate *CQ* issues in class.

Sept 9 - 11 An introduction to Congress and *CQ Magazine*; Historical and Constitutional context for understanding Congress

Davidson *et al*, pp. 3-26; pp. 409 - 418; 435-447;
Appendix A; chapters 15, 16 (especially read before a CQ presentation)

Sept 16 - 18 Introduction to studying Congress: Research Questions and Resources; Themes in studying Congress; Getting a handle on the specialized language and actions of Congress.

Davidson *et al*, pp. 26-37; Ch. 3, 5
Swers, Ch. 1

Sept 23 – Oct 2

The Concept of Representation; An Introduction to Members at Home and in Washington; Home Styles and Hill Styles.

Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 11, 1, 5, 16
Swers, Ch. 2

Oct 2 – 7 Congress as an Institution: The External Environment: Constituents and Organized Interests

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 13
Swers, Ch. 3

Oct 7 - 16 Congressional Elections: recruitment and candidacy; the power of incumbency in historical perspective; the role of political parties; women running for and elected to Congress

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 3, 4
Swers, Ch. 4

EXAM #1: OCTOBER 21st

Oct 23 - 30 Introduction to C-SPAN, *The Congressional Record*, and other Congressional documents; The Legislative Process: Overview, Rules and Procedures of the House and Senate

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 8

LIBRARY WORKSHOP: OCTOBER 30th

Nov 4 – 6 Institutional Features: Committees and Subcommittees

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 7
Swers, Ch. 5

Nov 11 - 18 The Legislative Process: party and party leadership; leadership activities, style, and strategies; voting cues

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 6, 9

Nov 18 - 25 Appropriations and the Budget Process; Agendas

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 14, 15

Dec 2 – 9 Brief Introduction and Overview of Congress vis a vis the other Branches of Government: The Presidency, The Courts

Davidson *et al*, Ch. 10, 11, 12, 15, 16
Swers, Ch. 6

RESEARCH PAPERS DUE: No later than Dec. 4th at 11:40 a.m. [Information on the paper assignment will be distributed in class. If you turn in your paper before Dec. 4th, your chances of knowing your paper grade going into the 2nd exam will improve.]

The focus of your research paper, and topics and themes in the second half of the course will overlap.

EXAM # 2: December 11th

This exam will cover material since the midterm.