**POLS 5043-201 Jeremy F. Duff**

**Congress Office: 211 O’Donohoe Hall**

**MWF 10:00am-10:50am Phone: 940-397-4747**

**Spring Term 2019 e-mail: jeremy.duff@msutexas.edu**

**209 Prothro-Yeager Hall**

# COURSE SYLLABUS

# Course Description

This class explores the process by which the U.S. Congress has been institutionalized throughout U.S. History to create a political entity whose main role is to protect the interests of its members. Students will be taught not only how the U.S. Congress works, but the theories and concepts that underscore how Congress has become the institution we see today. To do this we will focus on Congress’s “collective dilemma”: Can a truly representative legislature also be a responsive and efficient political institution? What tradeoffs occur when legislators seek to maximize both representation and responsibility?

# Required Texts

*The United States Congress.* E. Scott Adler, Jeffrey A. Jenkins, and Charles R. Shippan. 2019. W. W. Norton.

I will also assign a number of journal articles that you will be required to read. These will be posted on the course D2L page.

**D2L Page:** The course has a supplemental D2L page where I will post any course materials that you will need throughout the semester.

**Office Hours:**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 1:30pm-3:00pm

Tuesday: 1:00pm-4:30pm

Thursday: 1:00pm-3:00pm

Also, by appointment (**send me an e-mail to schedule an appointment**)

**Student Responsibilities**

*Attendance:* Class attendance is strongly encouraged. It has been my experience that those who do not attend class tend to have a difficult time with the course and generally receive lower grades. I will not regularly take attendance, however, throughout the course of the semester I may feel it necessary to take attendance in order to provide extra points on exams for those who are putting forth the effort to come to class. Students are expected to act like responsible adults in class.

*Readings:* The readings serve as a point of departure for lectures and discussions.  Therefore, it is imperative that each student completes the assigned reading before a topic is taken up in class. You should come prepared to ask questions, answer questions and discuss the topics at hand.

# *Participation*:  Students should feel free to raise questions concerning the readings, the instructor's discussion, and the comments of other students.  Participation enhances course quality. This particular type of class lends itself to a favorable discussion environment, so please do not be afraid to ask questions or pose interesting topics for the class to discuss (that are relevant to the course material).

*Congressional Simulation:* Students will be required to play a leadership role in a congressional simulation. Leadership roles may include Speaker of the House, Majority Leader, Minority Leader, a Committee Chairmanship, or a combination of these. Specific guidelines for the simulation will be provided in a separate handout. All material for the simulation must be turned in on the due dates provided. Late work will not be accepted. This portion of the class makes up 30% of your final grade and should be taken very seriously.

*Reaction Papers***:** There is a folder in the D2L site for the course that contains journal articles for you to read. In order to demonstrate an understanding of the literature, you are required to write a total of three “reaction” papers that summarize, synthesize, and critique three of the journal articles. The papers should run no longer than 5 double-spaced pages. They should briefly synthesize the theory, methods, and findings of the paper, and most importantly critique the paper. As we get further in the semester, better papers will draw on research discussed in previous weeks. More effort and attention should be focused on analysis and criticism than on summarization. A paper that only summarizes the article will receive a low grade. The due dates for the papers are as follows:

1. February 8, 2019
2. March 8, 2019
3. April 5, 2019

You must upload your papers to the appropriate D2L Dropbox no later than 11:59pm on the due dates. Late papers will not be accepted.

*Research Paper:* This assignment will take the form of a research proposal, due in the appropriate D2L Dropbox by noon, May 3, 2019. By a research proposal, I mean an academic research paper that begins with a research question, proposes a theory to answer it, and includes a literature review that addresses the most relevant articles and books that deal with the particular topic of the paper. In short, it is an academic research paper minus the data analysis. The papers will be judged by the criteria I would apply to a paper delivered at a professional conference, or one submitted to a journal [as if, of course, the research had actually been conducted]. In addition, the proposal will be judged by its realism (i.e., whether it could actually be completed as a conference paper, journal article, or thesis project).

*Required Examinations*: There will be two required in-class examinations. One regular within-term exam and a final. The scheduled examination dates are as follows:

Exam 1: February 22, 2019

Exam 2: April 15, 2019

***Please note that for whatever reason you arrive late for an exam, you will not be able to take the exam once one student has “legitimately” taken the exam and left the exam room. Should this occur, you will be given a grade of zero on the exam.***

### Basic Policies

*Make-up Policy -- Examinations.* If a student has a University-approved excuse AND if the instructor is notified IN WRITING, PRIOR to the examination, arrangements for a make-up will be made. If a student fails to notify the instructor, the student will receive a zero for the exam.

*Exams and Grading*. I WILL ONLY discuss a grade with you in my office. I WILL NOT discuss a grade with you before or after class in the classroom, in the hallway, outside by my car, or over the phone. I want you to take time to look over your exam thoroughly, outside of the classroom before you make an argument for a different grade. Any discussion of exam grades should take place within my office hours or by appointment in my office if you are not able to attend the scheduled office hours. If you feel that you and another student provided similar or equal answers to an exam question and you received a lower grade on that question, then both students must come to the assigned office hours with their exams in order for me to evaluate the answers equally and fairly. Keep in mind that in some cases I may lower the grade of the other student and not raise yours after reviewing both answers, if I feel that the situation deems it necessary. Finally, if I cannot read your handwriting or understand an answer because of poor sentence structure, etc. the answer will be counted wrong. College students, without a University documented disability, should be able to write legibly and in complete, coherent sentences.

*Taking Exams Early.* Only under extraordinary circumstances will a student be allowed to take an exam, including the final, early. Only university approved excuses, death in the family, illness, etc. will be considered for taking an exam early. You must request to take an exam early IN WRITING. So, before you even ask, a job interview does not count as an extraordinary circumstance, nor does a wedding or anything fun you want to do.

*Wikipedia.* At no time will a student be allowed to use Wikipedia as a source for any project or paper in my class. If it is determined that Wikipedia was used as a source for a project or paper, the student will be given a grade of ZERO automatically.

*Plagiarism.* Plagiarism in any form is unacceptable. Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor.

In all of your assignments, including your homework or drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution. “Proper attribution” means that you have fully identified the original source and extent of your use of the words or ideas of others that you reproduce in your work for this course, usually in the form of a footnote or parenthesis.

As a general rule, if you are citing from a published source or from a web site and the quotation is short (up to a sentence or two) place it in quotation marks; if you employ a longer passage from a publication or web site, please indent it and use single spacing. In both cases, be sure to cite the original source in a footnote or in parentheses.

This is not limited to direct quotations. Any time you use material from a published source, whether quoting directly, borrowing from it, or paraphrasing, you can only do so with proper attribution.

If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from me.

Finally, you should keep in mind that as a member of the campus community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors and will be evaluated on your own merits. So be proud of your academic accomplishments and help to protect and promote academic integrity at MSU. The consequences of cheating and academic dishonesty – including a formal discipline file, possible loss of future internship, scholarship, or employment opportunities, and denial of admission to graduate school – are simply not worth it.

Any paper or assignment that is found to be plagiarized will be given a grade of zero and will be reported through the proper channels according to the guidelines provided in the MSU Student Handbook.

*Late Assignments:* I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE ASSIGNMENTS, PAPERS, EXAMS, OR ANYTHING ELSE. IF IT’S LATE, YOU WILL GET A ZERO.

*Student Handbook:* If you have any other questions about student conduct or responsibilities, especially those about plagiarism and cheating; please consult the Student Handbook available online and through the Dean of Students Office.

**Classroom Behavior**

*Cellphones:*  These should be turned off when entering the classroom, unless prior arrangements have been made with me concerning a family emergency.

AT NO TIME WILL YOU BE ALLOWED TO LOOK AT YOUR CELLPHONE DURING AN EXAM OR QUIZ. IF YOU ARE OBSERVED LOOKING AT YOUR CELLPHONE/PAGER ONCE AN EXAM OR QUIZ HAS BEEN HANDED TO YOU, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO FOR THAT EXAM OR QUIZ.

*General Behavior.* There should be no talking while I am lecturing or while another student is answering a question or sharing their opinion on the subject matter of the class. If this occurs, students will be warned and if the disruptive behavior continues you will be removed from the class.

*Lateness.*  **If you miss an assignment because you arrive to class late, you will receive a grade of zero on that assignment.**

**Grading and Assignments.** The two exams will count 30% (15% apiece) toward your final grade. 30% of your grade will be made up of your participation in the legislative simulation. Your grade for this part of the course will consist of my evaluation of your participation as a whole in the simulation as well as your completion of the assignments associated with the simulation. The reaction papers will make up 20% of your grade. The research proposal will make up the final 20% of your grade.

Grades will be distributed as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cut Off** | **Grade** |
| 90-100% | A |
| 80-89% | B |
| 70-79% | C |
| 60-69% | D |
| <60% | F |

# Class Schedule

All required readings should be completed prior to the class in which they are scheduled.

| **Date** | **Readings/Activities** |
| --- | --- |
| January 14 | Introduction and Overview of the Course  No Readings |
| January 16-23  No Class on January 21 | Representation and Governing in a Separated System  Chapter 1 |
| January 25-January 30 | The Historical Development of Congress  Chapter 2 |
| February 1-February 6 | Representation  Chapter 3 |
| February 8-February 13 | Elections  Chapter 4 |
| February 15-February 20 | Committees  Chapter 5 |
| **February 22** | **Exam 1** |
| February 25-March 1 | Parties  Chapter 6 |
| March 4-March 8 | Policy Making  Chapter 7 |
| March 11-March 15 | The Legislative Effectiveness of Congress and Its Members  Chapter 8 |
| **March 18-March 22** | **Spring Break** |
| March 25-March 29 | Congress and the President  Chapter 9 |
| April 1-April 5 | Congress and the Bureaucracy  Chapter 10 |
| April 8-April 12 | Congress and the Courts  Chapter 11 |
| **April 15** | **Exam 2** |
| **April 17** | **Simulation Begins**  First Party Caucuses |
| **April 19** | **Easter Break** |
| April 22 | Writing Legislation |
| April 24 | Health Education and Welfare Committee Hearing |
| April 26 | Economic Affairs Committee Hearing |
| April 29 | Health Education and Welfare Committee Markups |
| May 1 | Economic Affairs Committee Markups |
| May 3 | Floor Session |