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PSC 387.01: Legislative Politics

Michael J. Laslovich

University of Montana - Missoula

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Department of Political Science

PSc 387 Legislative Politics
Spring 1996
M. Laslovich

Office: LA 415
Hrs: MW 10-11:00,
T 1:30-2:30, R 1-2:00,
and by app't (4901)

Course Description

Analysis of the structure, processes, and politics of the U.S. Congress. Topics include member-constituent relations, party leadership, the committee system, House-Senate relations, and term limitations. A case study will be utilized to analyze and assess the role of Congress in the policy-making process.

Texts

Students are required to read the following texts which are available at the University Bookstore:

- Fenno, Jr., Richard F. When Incumbency Fails, The Senate Career of Mark Andrews. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1992;
Smith, Steven S. The American Congress. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995;
Thomas, Sue. How Women Legislate. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994; and
Waldman, Steven. The Bill, How Legislation Really Becomes Law: A Case Study of the National Service Bill. Revised and Updated. New York: Penguin Books, 1996.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated upon the following basis:

Exam 1 (Feb. 28) Topics I-IV	20%
Research paper prospectus (Due Feb. 23 IN CLASS)	5%
Exam 2 (April 1) Topics V-VII	20%
Research Essay (Due March 22 IN CLASS)	30%
Final Exam (Mon., May 13, 3:20-5:20) Topics VIII-XI	25%

Drop/Add and Grading Option Policies

March 11 - Last day to drop or add classes or change grading option.

Makeup Exam Policy

Students who are excused from a scheduled examination may write a makeup exam. In fairness to all students, exam absences must be approved by the instructor.

Research Essays

Students are invited to choose a research topic of their choice. Research paper prospectuses are DUE Feb. 23 IN CLASS.

Research Essays (continued)

Please note that this is to be a research paper. Consequently the amount of research undertaken, and the ability to marshal that information effectively, will be crucial in the evaluation of the paper.

The paper should range between 10 to 15 double-spaced typed pages. Papers are due March 22 in class. Late papers will be penalized TWO points per day, including weekends.

The Classroom Learning Environment (authored by Dr. Ronald Perrin, Professor of Political Theory)

Wherever the learning process takes place (for example, in the library or the seclusion of one's study) it does so best when there are a minimum of distractions. This requirement poses special challenges for the learning that takes place in the lecture hall or the classroom, where the possibility of distractions is the greatest.

In order to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment for my students I will not tolerate the few individuals who might be prone to a) come to class late or leave early, b) carry on private conversations during class, or c) use the lecture hall/classroom as an opportunity to read material, such as the Kaimin, that is not relevant to the subject matter under consideration.

The only exception to these conditions concern students whose work schedules or unanticipated appointments require them to arrive for class late or leave early. In these circumstances I would appreciate knowing of the circumstance before it occurs and, in all such instances, request that students do so as unobtrusively as possible. Thank you.

Lecture Topics and Readings - Supplemental readings may be added during the course of the semester.

I	<u>Introduction</u> Smith, chapter 1.	VIII	<u>Congress and the President</u> Smith, chapter 8. Waldman.
II	<u>Legislative Rules</u> Smith, chapter 2.	IX	<u>Congress and the Courts</u> Smith, chapter 9.
III	<u>Congressional Elections</u> Smith, chapter 3. Fenno.	X	<u>Congress and Lobbyists</u> Smith, chapter 10.
IV	<u>Members of Congress</u> Smith, chapter 4.	XI	<u>Case Studies</u> Smith, chapters 11, 12, and 13. Thomas
V	<u>Parties and Leaders</u> Smith, chapter 5.		
VI	<u>Committee System</u> Smith, chapter 6.		
VII	<u>Voting System</u> Smith, chapter 7.		