COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Description
This is an undergraduate course on the United States Congress. Of course, we will cover such meat and potatoes topics as the legislative process, committees, elections, etc. In addition we will discuss what forms and degrees of representation are fostered by existing electoral rules, how important parties are in securing legislative representation, and 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? By the end of the term, you should be well versed in not only the actual workings of the United States Congress, but the theories and concepts that attempt to explain how it works, and why it operates the way it does.

Required Texts
Roger Davidson and Walter Oleszek: Congress and Its Members, 13th ed.
Lauren Cohen Bell: The US Congress: A Simulation for Students

Course Website:
I maintain a course website that will keep you up to date on what is happening in your course. You can get to the website by visiting this link:

http://faculty.mwsu.edu/politicalscience/jeremy.duff/teaching.asp

Then click on the link that goes to your course.

Office Hours:
Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10:00am-11:00am
Tuesday: 9:00am-11:00am, 2:00pm-5:00pm
Thursday: 9:00am-11:00am
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).

Quizzes: There will be periodic “pop” quizzes given in class covering lecture and textbook material. These quizzes will be graded and will count towards your quiz grade for the course. This should encourage class attendance and also help make sure students are keeping up with the reading. If you are not present for a quiz and do not have a University approved excuse, you will be given a grade of ZERO on that quiz.

Required Examinations: There will be two required in-class examinations. One regular within-term exam and a final. The scheduled examination dates (tentative-these may change) are as follows:
Exam 1: March 9, 2012
Final Exam: May 7, 2012 (8:00am-10:00am)

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 (this includes the final).

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 within 24 hours of the missed exam, the student will automatically receive a zero for the exam. Exams missed due to court appearances in which you are a defendant, will not be made up.

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.

Classroom Behavior

Cellphones, pagers, and so on. Cell phones, pagers, etc. should be turned off when entering the classroom, unless prior arrangements have been made with me concerning a family emergency. If your cell phone goes off during an exam or quiz, IT WILL BE CONFISCATED and returned to you when you hand in the exam or quiz.

AT NO TIME WILL YOU BE ALLOWED TO LOOK AT YOUR CELLPHONE/PAGER 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 a quiz because you arrive to class late, you will receive a grade of zero on that quiz.
**Grading and Assignments.** The two exams will count 50% (25% a piece) toward your final grade. 40% of your grade will be made up of from 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 final 10% of your grade will be your quiz average.

Grades will be distributed as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cut Off</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Class Schedule**
All required reading and assignments are due on the day listed IN CLASS!!!.

**January**

18: **Introduction and overview of course**

20: **Congress’s Collective Dilemma**
    Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 1

23-25: **The Framers’ Design**
    Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 2
    “Article 1 of the Constitution” (Can be found online)
    Federalist 52, 58, 62, 63, 64 (Can be found online)

27-Feb. 1: **Campaigns and Elections, Part 1**
    Jacobson, Ch. 1-3

**February**

3-8: **Campaigns and Elections, Part 2**
    Jacobson, Ch. 4-5

10-13: **Campaigns and Elections, Part 3**
    Jacobson, Ch. 6-7

15-17: **The Electoral Connection**
    Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 5
20-24: Political Parties and Leadership  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 6

Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 8  
Simulation Member Preferences Due by February 29

March

5-7: Lawmaking: The Legislative Process, Part 2 (Committees)  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 7

9: MIDTERM EXAM

12-16: Spring Break (no class)

19-21: Lawmaking: The Legislative Process, Part 3 (Deliberation)  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 9

23-26: Congress and the President  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 10

28-30: Congress and the Bureaucracy  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 11

April

2-4: Congress and the Courts  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 12  
Simulation Member Profile Due on April 1

6: Easter Break (no class)

9-11: Congress and Organized Interests  
Davidson and Oleszek, Ch. 13

13: First Party Caucuses

16: Writing Legislation

18: Health, Education and Welfare Committee Hearing  
Simulation Dear Colleague Letters, Bill Justifications, and Cosponsor Forms Due

20: Economic Affairs Committee Hearing

23: Health, Education and Welfare Committee Markup
25: Economic Affairs Committee Markup
27: Second Party Caucuses
30: Floor Session

May

2: Floor Session
4: Constituency Newsletter
7: Final Exam (8:00am-10:00am)