This course is designed as an in-depth survey of how political science understands the United States Congress. Congress is a large and fascinating place and the study of it encompasses a wide range of topics. We will begin by delving into its historical foundations and then look at the role elections play in determining who gets into Congress and how they behave once they get there. We’ll ask the question: Do parties matter? You might think there is a simple answer to that question, but as we’ll find out, it’s not quite that simple.

In the second half of the semester, we will dive into the deep end of the pool and explore the rules of the game. If you’ve ever played a game, watched a sport, attended a school, or watched the show Big Brother you know that the rules matter a lot. In fact, they matter so much that they can often be said to determine our behavior. This is true of Congress as well. Thus, we will spend a great deal of time focused on the rules of Congress—what they are and how they impact the behavior of members of Congress.

The final few weeks of class are dedicated to placing Congress in context. As you know, Congress is not the only part of the federal government. Therefore, we will explore how Congress interacts with the executive branch, the courts and (just as importantly) interest groups. Does the president dominate Congress? Do bureaucratic agencies do whatever they want? How can Congress influence the choices justices make when they are appointed for life? Are lobbyists simply buying the legislation they want from members of Congress?

By the end of this semester you will understand the world’s oldest popularly elected legislative body better than about 97% of the people in this country.

In addition, this course, through its multiple assignments, will help students express and interpret information, develop critical thinking skills, integrate and apply knowledge to their personal and professional lives, expand and deepen their knowledge of political science research methods, which includes a fuller understanding of this society, culture, values and ethics.
Required Texts

All of the texts for this course are available in the Bookstore.

3. *Party Polarization in Congress*, Sean Theriault

In addition to the three texts, we will also make use of supplemental readings available on the web through the academic journal website www.jstor.org. The jstor.org website is freely available to all students if accessed directly from a computer on campus. If you would like to get access to jstor.org off campus, you will need to sign in through the University Library’s research portal found on the library’s website. I will also post readings to Oncourse.

Graded Assignments

The grade in this class will be based on four assignments: class presentation, writing assignment, class participation, and quizzes. The class presentation is worth 10% of your overall grade, the writing assignment is worth 20% of your overall grade, the quizzes are 60% of your overall grade and class participation is worth 10% of your overall grade.

**First assignment:** You will sign up and be responsible for reading one article. This is an article from a political science academic journal or a chapter from a book. You will be responsible for two things with regards to this article. 1) You will present the article to the class. The rest of the class is responsible for reading the article too, so they should have knowledge of the topic. The class and myself will discuss the article with you and ask questions and make comments. 2) There will be a form posted on OnCourse containing an outline of what you will be presenting to the class. You will fill this out and email an electronic copy of your filled out form **BEFORE CLASS** to myself and the entire class. This can be done through OnCourse. This assignment will be worth 10 percent of your overall grade. Additionally, because these readings need to be presented in the proper order, there will be a heavy penalty for not presenting your article/chapter on the day assigned. In other words, DO NOT MISS THIS DAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! It cannot be made up.

**Second assignment:** There will be 4 in class quizzes. These will consist primarily of multiple choice questions and perhaps one or two short answer. They will cover all the readings and class presentations. These quizzes will be worth 15 percent of your overall grade each. Thus, collectively they are worth 60 percent of your overall grade.

**Third assignment:** You will write a final paper that will consist of your response to a question or questions I will hand out a week before the last class session. This will be a
broad question(s) that will expect you to incorporate as much of the class material as possible to answer. This will be due to me on the last day of class. This assignment will be worth 20 percent of your overall grade.

**Fourth assignment:** Class participation. Showing up to class is NOT participation. While showing up to class is a necessary prerequisite to participation, it is not sufficient. Basically, you can think of this assignment in the following manner: At the beginning of the semester you have failed this assignment because we haven’t had any classes yet and thus there has been no opportunity for you to participate. If all you do is show up to class and never say a thing, you will have maintained this failure. In other words, you can never miss a class and still fail this assignment. Additionally, saying one thing each class is NOT good enough to get an A on this assignment. If you show up to every class and say one thing each time that would be a C. In order to get an A on this assignment I am looking for consistent quality participation. In my experience only a handful of students participate at this kind of level, but I would love to have everyone do so! This is worth 10 percent of your overall grade.

In addition to these assignments, I reserve the right to add additional assignments (quizzes). If I do, I will announce these in advance (and we will slightly alter the percentages associated with various assignments). You should be aware that every assignment is required. If you fail to complete any assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment and your course grade will suffer significantly.

Turning in assignments late will result in a penalty. I will lower your grade by 10 points for each day it is late. For example, if the assignment is due on Monday and you complete it on Tuesday, the maximum number of points you can get is 90. The only potentially acceptable reasons for not completing an assignment on time are illness and family emergency (family trips or gatherings are NOT emergencies). Should either of these circumstances arise, you may receive extra time, but only if you (1) inform me prior to the assignment’s due date, and (2) provide me with documentation of the circumstances. You must do BOTH numbers 1 and 2 in order to avoid penalties for late assignments.

While a curve may be used in determining the final distribution of grades, any student who acquires at least 93% (or more) of the weighted points will not receive a grade lower than an A, 90-92% an A-, 87-89% a B+, 83-86% a B, 80-82% a B-, 77-79% a C+, 73-76 a C, 70-72 a C-, and 60-70% a D. Thus, the curve will only be used to improve your grade. You should note that I do not give pluses or minuses for any grade in the D or F range. I do not allow students to submit extra work in an attempt to raise his or her grade, unless I have specified to the entire class that such an opportunity exists.

**Academic Integrity**
Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. You are expected to know and will be held to the standards of IUPUI’s Student Code of Conduct. By accepting this syllabus and participating in this class you are agreeing to abide by this code.
The code can be found on the web here: http://www.iupui.edu/code/

Any cheating on an exam or plagiarism in the paper will result in automatic failure of that assignment. Two instances will result in failure of the class. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Finally
There are a number of campus-wide policies governing the conduct of courses at IUPUI. These can be found at http://registrar.iupui.edu/course_policies.html

Class Calendar and Assigned readings
(These dates are estimates. We may fall behind or get ahead at various points during the semester)

Week 1: Aug. 25th, 27th, Sept. 1st

What is Political Science? What is Congress?

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 1, What is Wrong
AC Reader, chapter 3, Public Approval and Disapproval

Posted to Oncourse:
Kellstedt and Whitten---Methods

Week 2: Sept. 3rd, 8th

Congress and its History

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 40, Spatial Theory of Legislating
AC Reader, chapter 4, Constitution
AC Reader, chapter 5, The Federalist
AC Reader, chapter 6, Members in Their Constituencies
AC Reader, chapter 7, Collective vs. Dyadic Representation

Presentations Sept. 8th:
AC Reader, chapter 5, The Federalist
AC Reader, chapter 6, Members in Their Constituencies
AC Reader, chapter 7, Collective vs. Dyadic Representation
Week 3: Sept. 10th, 15th

Congressional Elections

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 9, Dynamics of U.S. House Elections

Posted to Oncourse:
Carson et al. 2011
Konisky and Ueda 2011
Abramowitz et al. “Don’t Blame Redistricting for Uncompetitive Elections”
McDonald, “Drawing the Line on District Competition”
Abramowitz et al. “Drawing the Line on District Competition: A Rejoinder”
McDonald, “Re-Drawing the Line on District Competition”

Presentations Sept. 15th
AC Reader, chapter 9, Dynamics of U.S. House Elections
Carson et al. 2011
Konisky and Ueda 2011

Week 4: Sept. 17th, 22nd

The Electoral Connection

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 10, The Electoral Connection
AC Reader, chapter 11, Senate Representation
AC Reader, chapter 12, Progressive Ambition
AC Reader, chapter 13, Issue Politics

Presentation Sept. 22nd
AC Reader, chapter 11, Senate Representation
AC Reader, chapter 12, Progressive Ambition
AC Reader, chapter 13, Issue Politics

Week 5: Sept. 24th, 29th

Political Parties and Leaders

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 14, Cannon to Rayburn
*Party Polarization in Congress* pages 1-128

*Presentations* Sept. 29th
*Party Polarization in Congress* chapter 4
*Party Polarization in Congress* chapter 5
*Party Polarization in Congress* chapter 6

**Week 6:** Oct. 1st, 6th

Parties in Congress

Readings:
*Party Polarization in Congress* pages 129 – 228
AC Reader, chapter 22, On the Effect of Legislative Rules
AC Reader, chapter 23, Procedural Choice

*Presentation* Oct. 1st
*Party Polarization in Congress* chapter 7
*Party Polarization in Congress* chapter 8
*Party Polarization in Congress* chapter 9

**Week 7:** Oct. 8th, 13th  ***** Second Quiz Oct. 8th covering Weeks 4, 5, and 6*****

Parties in Congress

Readings:
*White-Collar Government* chapters 1, 2, 3
AC Reader, chapter 20, Special Rule
AC Reader, chapter 21, Unanimous Consent Agreement
AC Reader, chapter 24, Evolution of Agenda-Setting Institutions

*Presentations* Oct. 13th
*White-Collar Government* ch. 1
*White-Collar Government* ch. 2
*White-Collar Government* ch. 3

**Week 8:** Oct. 15th, 22nd

Parties in Congress
Readings:
White-Collar Government Chapters 4, 5, 6

Presentations Oct. 15th
White-Collar Government Ch. 4
White-Collar Government Ch. 5
White-Collar Government Ch. 6

Week 9: Oct. 27th, 29th  **** Third Quiz Oct. 29th covering weeks 7, 8, and 9****

Committees

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 17, Distributive and Partisan Issues
AC Reader, chapter 18, Principals, Goals, Dimensionality
AC Reader, chapter 19, Nonlegislative Hearings and Policy Change

Presentations  Oct. 27th
AC Reader, chapter 17, Distributive and Partisan Issues
AC Reader, chapter 18, Principals, Goals, Dimensionality
AC Reader, chapter 19, Nonlegislative Hearings and Policy Change

Week 10:  Nov. 3rd, 5th

The Floor

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 25, Greasing the Wheels
AC Reader, chapter 26, Models of Legislative Voting

Presentations Nov. 5th
AC Reader, chapter 25, Greasing the Wheels
AC Reader, chapter 26, Models of Legislative Voting

Week 11: Nov. 10th, 12th

Congress, the President, and the Executive Branch

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 30, Veto Bargaining
AC Reader, chapter 31, Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock
AC Reader, chapter 32, Politics of Shared Power

OnCourse:
“The Two Faces of Power,” Bachrach and Baratz

Presentations Nov. 12th
“The Two Faces of Power,” Bachrach and Baratz
AC Reader, chapter 31, Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock
AC Reader, chapter 32, Politics of Shared Power

Week 12: Nov. 17th, 19th

Congress and the Courts

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 34, Senate Voting on Supreme Court Nominees
AC Reader, chapter 35, Why Some Presidential Nominations Fail

OnCourse:

Presentations Nov. 19th
AC Reader, chapter 34, Senate Voting on Supreme Court Nominees
AC Reader, chapter 35, Why Some Presidential Nominations Fail

Week 13: Nov. 24th, Dec. 1st

Congress and Interest Groups

Readings:
AC Reader, chapter 36, Buying Time
AC Reader, chapter 37, Legislative Lobbying

OnCourse:
Witko 2011
Goldman, Rocholl, and So 2013
Chen, Parsley and Yang 2015

Presentations Nov. 24th
AC Reader, chapter 36, Buying Time
AC Reader, chapter 37, Legislative Lobbying

**Week 14:** Dec. 3rd, 8th  **Fourth Quiz Dec. 3rd covering wks 10, 11, 12 and 13***

Hand out final Question(s) on Dec. 3rd

**Week 15:** Dec. 10th
Turn in response to final question(s) to me in my office CA 503g