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PSCI 441 01W: CONGRESSIONAL POLITICS

COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2021

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Chad M. King
Class Meeting Times: Online
Office Location: SS-162
Office Hours: M 9:50-11, 1-3; W 9:50-11, 1-2; F 9:50-11.
(Can meet virtually T/Th by request)
University Email Address: chad.king@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: E-mail
Communication Response Time: 24 hours (Up to 48 hours during weekends)

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required: Davidson, Oleszek, Lee, and Schickler, *Congress and Its Members*, 18th Edition. ISBN: 9781071836859.

Course Description

This course examines the constitutional foundations and historical development of the US Congress. The course is divided into three core sections: congressional

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

elections, legislative procedure, and congressional interaction with other political institutions and actors.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will understand the nature and importance of congressional elections.
2. Students will understand the nature and importance of congressional process.
3. Students will understand the nature and importance of congressional relations with other political institutions.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need to be familiar with the University learning management system, know how to use a personal computer, navigate the World Wide Web/Internet, and use basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word and Power Point.

Instructional Methods

The methods of instruction in this class will be student self-directed readings and recorded class lectures. This will be supplemented with online discussions and interactions as well as a research project.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

All students are expected to comply with the following requirements.

- All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.
- Students are expected to regularly check the course site for announcements and updates.
- Students are expected to complete all course readings for each section of the course.
- Students are expected to review any supplementary materials that the instructor provides, such as web links, news stories, etc.
- Students are expected to attend class regularly.

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- Students are expected to complete all assigned writing assignments, quizzes, class activities, and exams. All coursework will be submitted to the class page on MyLeo Online.
- Students are expected to exhibit respect toward their fellow classmates and the instructor. This includes treating everyone with courtesy and esteem in all correspondence for the course. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.
- Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments or taking exams), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. For this course, academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic work. In particular, any student who passes passing off work as their own that was actually written by someone else, without proper citation or attribution, will be considered to have committed plagiarism. This holds true whether material comes from the textbook, another publication, an Internet source, or another student. Any act of academic dishonesty on an exam or quiz will result in a score of 0 for the exam or quiz. Any act of academic dishonesty on a writing assignment will result in a 0 for the entire semester's writing assignment grade. Instances of academic dishonesty may also be referred to the appropriate offices on campus and may result in significant administrative penalties.
- Students will comply with all myLeo Online/D2L technical requirements in terms of training, computer access, & Internet access.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 89.5%-100%

B = 79.5%-89.4%

C = 69.5%-79.4%

D = 59.5%-69.4%

F = 59.4% or Below

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Grade Breakdown	%
Quizzes	11%
Discussions	11%
Exam One	22%
Exam Two	22%
Exam Three	22%
Research paper	22%
Final Grade	100%

Assessments

Quizzes

Students will take weekly quizzes over the assigned readings for the course. These quizzes will contain both multiple-choice and True/False questions. Students will have 10 minutes to complete each quiz. These quizzes cannot be made up, however, the instructor will automatically drop the lowest three quiz grades. The dates and times for these quizzes are listed at the end of the syllabus.

Discussion Assignments

This graded component of the course will consist of 6 discussions completed via the eCollege platform. Topics for the discussion assignments will be posted on the assigned dates at 9 AM and close 60 hours later at 9 PM. A list of assignment dates will be made available in D2L. Discussion assignments cannot be made up.

Students will be graded upon multiple criteria and receive a score between 0 and 5.

- Students are expected to submit an original response to the topic posted, answering all parts of the topic. This post should be 350-words minimum. At the end of this post, students should pose a question to other students that would extend discussion of the original topic.
- Students are expected to make at least 2 response posts to the posts and questions posed by other students in their discussion group. (Note you will not be able to view anyone else's post until you make your first post) Each of these posts should be at least 250 words. Students should include a word count in parentheses at the end of all of their posts. Students should engage in conversation with their group members in a thoughtful discussion about the topic as well as their individual responses to the topic.

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- Students will be graded on both the quality of the content of their original posts, as well as their engagement with other students in their response posts. Students should use theories and concepts introduced in the assigned readings, be analytical, and use real world examples. This will mean students will need to pay attention to the news and current events.
- Students who only make 2 total posts will receive no higher than 2.5.
- All content submitted for Discussion Assignments must be a student's original work. Any material taken from another source, including the textbook, should include a proper citation and quotation marks. Students should list their references at the end of posts but not include the words in these references in their word counts. Posts that include material that is copied or pasted from any source that is not cited will be considered acts of plagiarism as discussed above in the Course Policies and Procedures section. Students who do not follow the proper citation/attribution requirements listed above will receive a 0 for all of the discussion assignments.

Exams

Students will take three exams this semester, each worth 22% of the final grade. All exams will include material from the textbook, additional readings, and lecture. The exams may feature multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Research paper: Congress member project

Students will compile a paper in which they follow the actions and behavior of a current member of Congress. Students will track key votes, press releases, and other activities of their assigned member and compile a paper describing and analyzing what they observe. Students will complete various parts of the project throughout the semester and ultimately submit a completed paper at the end of the semester. A description of the paper, its various components and deadlines are available on the course page. The final paper is worth 22% of the final grade. Note: The final version of your paper will likely satisfy the Graduating Senior Portfolio requirement for a paper on *American Politics, Written Communication, or Research Skills*. The assignment description is available on the course page on D2L.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

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https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Students should rely upon e-mail, office hours, and course announcements as the primary means of communication with the instructor. I will use all of these to announce any changes to the course syllabus or other relevant information. Also, please note that the system will only send e-mail to your official University Email address, so you will need to check that account regularly. I will always try to e-mail you as soon as I can.

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From M-F, you can expect a reply within 24 hours. On the weekends, I may take 48 hours to respond.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

- Make-up exams: If a student misses an exam, that student will receive a grade of zero for the exam. Make-up exams will only be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Any request for a make-up exam must be made in writing and include documentation explaining why the absence was legitimate. Such a request must be received within 3 calendar days of the missed exam date, unless the student is physically unable to submit such a request. Legitimate reasons may include illness severe enough to require professional treatment, death of an immediate family member, participation in University activities, and legal obligations. Technical problems with accessing the course are not a valid excuse for missing an exam unless it can be shown that the problem is the fault of the myLeo Online platform. Students who miss any exam because they forgot about the exam dates/times will not receive a make-up exam. Please note, these reasons do not guarantee that a make-up exam will be given. Make-up exams will be exclusively essay format.
- Incompletes will be granted completely at the discretion of the instructor and only be granted in the case of serious medical illness or other serious, unavoidable circumstances and only if the student has completed at least 70% of the course work. Incompletes must be finished within two weeks of the end of the semester.
- Students must complete the "Personal Responsibility Statement" quiz available on the course site. Students who fail to do so by the time the first exam is graded will be administratively dropped from the course.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx).
<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

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Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

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Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Assigned readings are listed below. DOLS refers to chapters from the textbook. Articles are linked through D2L under the module titled "Readings"

Date	Reading Assignment
Week of 8/30	US Constitution, Federalist Papers 10, 51, 47-51, 53, 56-58, 62-63
	Federalist papers can be found at https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/full-text
Week of 9/6	DOLS, 1-2
	Polsby article
Week of 9/13	DOLS 3
	Abramowitz et al. article
Week of 9/20	DOLS 4
Week of 9/27	DOLS 5
	Fenno Article

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Week of 10/4	DOLS 6
	Cooper and Brady article
Week of 10/11	DOLS 7
	King Article
Week of 10/18	DOLS 8
Week of 10/25	DOLS 9
Week of 11/1	DOLS 10
Week of 11/8	DOLS 11
	McCubbins and Schwartz Article
Week of 11/15	DOLS 12
Week of 11/22	DOLS 13
Week of 11/29	DOLS 14
Week of 12/6	DOLS 15
Week of 12/13	Finals Week

Exam schedule

Exams will be available on the course page and are scheduled on the dates listed below. Each exam begins at 11:59 PM and closes 48 hours later.

Exam 1: Opens on 10/1/21 @ 11:59 AM and closes at 11:59 PM on 10/3/21. Covers Chapters 1-5.

Exam 2: Opens on 10/29/21 @ 11:59 AM and closes at 11:59 PM on 10/31/21. Covers Chapters 7-10.

Exam 3: Opens on 12/13/21 @ 9 AM and closes at 3:30 PM on 12/17/21. Covers Chapters 11-14.

Quiz Schedule

With the exception of exam weeks, and Thanksgiving week, quizzes will be given every week. Quizzes will open on Fridays at 11:59 AM and close 60 hours later on Sundays at 11:59 PM.

Research Paper Schedule

Selection of members of Congress are due on 9/10/21 at 11:59 PM. The final assignment is due by 11:59 PM on 11/19/21. Students must upload their topics and final assignments to D2L. See the course page for an assignment description, grading rubric, and a listing of important dates, times, and important resources.

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