

POL SCI 129: Congress and Foreign Policy

Dr. Timothy Turnbull

Fall 2021

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Office Hours: Tue 9:00-11:00am
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Class Hours: T/Th 3:30-4:50
Class Room: Steinhaus Hall 174

Course Description

It is a cliché in US politics to note that “you can’t conduct foreign policy with 535 Secretaries of State.” That is, conventional wisdom holds that authority over foreign policy is best concentrated in the hands of the executive rather than left to partisan wrangling among members of Congress. And yet while significant, and by some accounts too much, power is vested in the President in the realm of foreign affairs, Congress can and often does exert influence over the foreign policy of the United States. For example, Congress can lend legal approval to the President’s initiatives or push back against the President’s agenda. Similarly, individual members of Congress can champion narrow constituent interests or act as “policy entrepreneurs,” using their position as legislators to bring attention to certain global issues. Whatever the underlying reason or methods, it is clear that in the realm of foreign affairs, Congress matters. In this class we will explore why.

We will begin by covering the basics of legislative-executive relations as it concerns foreign policy. We will then shift our focus to the history of Congress’s role in foreign affairs from the end of WWII to the present, with special attention paid to institutional and ideological changes throughout this period. Specifically, we will examine the change from the so-called Cold War “consensus” period to the “dissensus” period, the end of the Cold War and the subsequent “Republican Revolution,” and partisan gridlock and the increased use of executive action in the 21st century. Throughout the course, special attention will be paid to the sources of congressional action, such as national electoral politics, parochial concerns, the role of policy entrepreneurs, and growing partisanship.

Learning Objectives

By participating in this course, you will be able to:

- Describe in detail the basic workings of the US Congress and Congress’ constitutional authority over foreign affairs.

- Explain the motivations behind congressional action in foreign affairs, both in general and in specific historical instances.
- Understand and explain the distortionary effects of congressional interference in US foreign policy and offer an informed opinion on Congress's role in US foreign policy.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

The final course grade will be determined by weighting your performance in the following areas:

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| 1. Participation (Attendance and Discussion Questions) | 15% |
| 2. Midterm I (Thursday, October 14th) | 25% |
| 3. Midterm II (Tuesday, November 9th) | 25% |
| 4. Final Exam (Tuesday, December 7th, 4:00-6:00pm) | 35% |

Numerical grades will be converted to letter grades at the following values:

A	=	93% and above	C+	=	77%-80%
A-	=	90%-93%	C	=	73%-77%
B+	=	87%-90%	C-	=	70%-73%
B	=	83%-87%	D+	=	67%-70%
B-	=	80%-83%	D	=	60%-67%
			F	=	60% and below

Further Course Information

Late Paper Policy

If you are unable to turn your assigned work in on time, you will be penalized one half grade per day on that assignment. For example, an otherwise A+ (100%) paper would be marked as 95% if it were to be turned in a day late, and 90% if turned in two days late. This penalty will be applied after the paper has been graded.

Absence Policy

Attendance is mandatory. If you must be absent from a class meeting, you must contact me beforehand with your reasoning and/or a relevant doctor's note. Failure to do so will result in a reduction of your participation score by 1 point.

Participation

Your participation grade will reflect not only your attendance, but your submission of weekly discussion questions on Canvas. Each week, you must submit **two** questions related to any of the readings from that week.

Accommodations

The UCI Disability Services Center provides equal opportunities to students with documented temporary and permanent orthopedic, visual, hearing, learning, chronic health, and psychological disabilities. If you qualify for services, please be sure to work with the Center to ensure I am notified of testing and other accommodations. If you are comfortable doing so, please feel free to come talk with me during office hours about ensuring this class is accessible to you. If you are not sure whether you qualify for services, please contact the office at 949-824-7497.

Other Resources

- **Center for Excellence in Writing & Communication:** This center provides consultations designed to improve your writing via revising and editing and identifying what parts of your writing need work. You can book appointments up to two weeks in advance at <http://www.writingcenter.uci.edu/appointments/>; appointment slots fill up fast, so be sure to sign up well in advance of deadlines. They also offer walk-in and email consultations. For more information, visit www.writingcenter.uci.edu.
- **UCI Counseling Center:** The UCI Counseling Center provides access to counseling and clinical services, and it also offers support groups and workshops, peer programs, and wellness resources for managing stress. Phone: 949-824-6457.
- **UCI Dreamers' Resource Office:** This office serves AB540 and undocumented students through advocacy, guidance, and support. Some of their services are also available to students with undocumented family members. Contact their office for more information at: 949-824-6390.

Academic Honesty

Learning, research, and scholarship depend upon an environment of academic integrity and honesty. This environment can be maintained only when all participants recognize the importance of upholding the highest ethical standards. All student work, including quizzes, exams, reports, and papers must be the work of the individual receiving credit. Academic dishonesty includes, for example, cheating on examinations or any assignment, plagiarism of any kind (including improper citation of sources), having someone else take an examination or complete an assignment for you (or doing this for someone else), or any activity in which you represent someone else's work as your own. Violations of academic integrity will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity and Student Conduct and will affect your grade in this course. Please familiarize yourself with UCI's Academic Integrity Policy (<https://aisc.uci.edu/policies/academic-integrity/index.php>) and speak to me if you have any questions about what is and is not allowed in this course.

Course Materials:

All readings will be available on Canvas. You will not need to purchase any books for this class.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction and Core Themes

- 9/23 - Introduction: Who Controls US Foreign Policy?

Readings

- Thurber, James, “An Introduction to Presidential-Congressional Rivalry,” in *Rivals for power: Presidential-Congressional Relations*, James A. Thurber, ed. (Lanham, Md: Rowman Littlefield Publishers, 2002)
- Schlesinger, Arthur, “The Legislative-Executive Balance in International Affairs: The Intentions of the Framers,” *Washington Quarterly* 12:4 (1989): 99-107.

Week 2: How Congress Works

- 9/28 - The Basics
- 9/30 - The Committee System

Readings

- Arenberg, Richard A., *Congressional Procedure: A Practical Guide to the Legislative Process in the U.S. Congress: The House of Representatives and Senate Explained* (Alexandria, VA: TheCapitol.Net, Inc., 2018): ch. 1-4.
- Congressional Research Service, “The ‘Regular Order:’ A Perspective,” CRS Report R46597 (November 6, 2020).

Week 3: The Sources of Congressional Action

- 10/5 - National Electoral Politics
- 10/7 - Lobbies and Parochialism

Readings

- Baum, Matthew, “The Constituent Foundations of the Rally-Round-the-Flag Phenomenon,” *International Studies Quarterly* 46:2 (2002): 263-298.
- Fenno, Richard, “U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration” *American Political Science Review* 71:3 (1977): 883-917.
- Fordham, Benjamin O., “Economic Interests and Congressional Voting on Security Issues,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52:5 (2008): 623-640.

Week 4: Policy Entrepreneurs

- 10/12 - Human Rights and Non-Proliferation
- 10/14 - Midterm I

Readings

- Ralph G. Carter and James M. Scott, *Choosing to Lead: Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), chs. 1, 3, 8.
- Rydell, Randy J., “Giving Nonproliferation Norms Teeth: Sanctions and the NPPA,” *The Nonproliferation Review* 6:2 (1999): 1-19.

Week 5: Congress and the Executive I

- 10/19 - The Cold War Consensus and Dissensus
- 10/21 - Congress in Support of the Executive

Readings

- Krebs, Ronald R., *Narrative and the Making of US National Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015): ch. 6.
- Ralph G. Carter and James M. Scott, *Choosing to Lead: Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), ch. 5.
- Milner, Helen V., and Dustin Tingley, *Sailing the Water’s Edge: The Domestic Politics of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015): ch. 4.

Week 6: Congress and the Executive II

- 10/26 - Congress in Opposition to the Executive
- 10/28 - The Republican Revolution

Readings

- Fowler, Linda L., *Watchdogs on the Hill: The Decline of Congressional Oversight of U.S. Foreign Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015): ch. 1.
- Prins, Brandon C. and Bryan W. Marshall, “Congressional Support of the President: A Comparison of Foreign, Defense, and Domestic Policy Decision-Making During and After the Cold War,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 31:4 (2001): 660-679.
- Theriault, Sean M., *The Gingrich Senators: The Roots of Partisan Warfare in Congress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), chs. 2-3.

Week 7: Congress and the 21st Century President

- 11/2 - Congress and the Executive - Clinton through Obama
- 11/4 - The Patriot Act, the AUMF, and the Global War on Terror

Readings

- Maguire, Lori, “The US Congress and the Politics of Afghanistan: An Analysis of the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees During George W Bush’s Second Term,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 26:2 (2013), 430–452.
- Ralph G. Carter and James M. Scott, *Choosing to Lead: Understanding Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), ch. 7.
- Trubowitz, Peter, and Nicole Mellow, “Foreign Policy, Bipartisanship and the Paradox of Post-September 11 America,” *International Politics* 48 (2011): 164-187.

Week 8: Midterm II

- 11/9 - Midterm II
- 11/11 - No Class: Veteran’s Day

Week 9: Trade and Sanctions

- 11/16 - Trade Politics and Economic Sanctions
- 11/18 - Case Study: Iran Nuclear Deal

Readings

- Velut, Jean-Baptiste, “Inter-Branch Relations in US Trade Policymaking: Balance of Power or Authoritarian Drift?” *Papers in Political Economy* 65 (2021): 1-21.
- Tama, Jordan, “Forcing the President’s Hand: How the U.S. Congress Shapes Foreign Policy Through Sanctions Legislation,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 16:3 (2020): 397-416.
- Böller, Florian, and Lukas D. Herr, “From Washington Without Love: Congressional Foreign Policy Making and US-Russian Relations Under President Trump,” *Contemporary Politics* 26:1 (2020): 17-37.

Week 10: The Future: Credibility

- 11/23 Polarization, Gridlock, and Executive Action
- 11/25 - No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Readings

- Schultz, Kenneth A., “Perils of Polarization for U.S. Foreign Policy,” *The Washington Quarterly* 40:4 (2017): 7-28.
- Oleszek, Mark J., and Walter J. Oleszek, “Institutional Challenges Confronting Congress after 9/11: Partisan Polarization and Effective Oversight,” in David P. Auerswald and Colton C. Campbell, eds., *Congress and the Politics of National Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012): ch. 3.
- Jeong, Gyung-Ho, and Paul J. Quirk, “Division at the Water’s Edge: The Polarization of Foreign Policy,” *American Politics Research* 47:1 (2019): 58-87

Week 11:

- 11/30 - Review
 - No readings

Final Exam

- **Tuesday, December 7th, 4:00-6:00pm**