This is a course on the creation, evolution, selection, organization and behavior of Congress and the executive branch. We will examine these institutions and their members. We will also look at the interactions between Congress and the Presidency, as well as national policymaking.

**Purposes of the Course**

The course has three main purposes:

1. **To educate you about politics, government and policymaking at the national level.** The specific topics to be covered are described in the introductory paragraph of the syllabus and in the schedule below.

   Studying the Presidency and Congress also requires you to become skilled social scientists. I shall therefore teach you skills connected to this such as formulating hypotheses (predictions), testing these hypotheses, using appropriate data and methods and analyzing results. We are in a political science class and I will therefore be developing your ability to use the scientific method.

2. **To present to you the virtues of public life and leadership and to make you better citizens.** I want to get you to reject this description of politics that Bill Clinton gave at the 1993 Gridiron dinner: “The word comes from ‘poli’, which in Greek means many, and ‘tics’ which are blood-sucking leeches.” Public service is a noble profession and we need talented and dedicated people to serve our neighborhoods, communities, cities, state, nation and world.

   This class will teach you that service is valuable and I hope to persuade some of you to take on positions of public leadership. Short of that, I want to make you aware of your responsibilities, as citizens, to participate in public life.

3. **To provide you with a variety of skills that you need to be successful in today’s economy.** The three such skills I will emphasize here are writing skills, analytical skills, and experiential or vocational skills.

   (A) **Writing.** Whatever you do in life, strong, clear and grammatically-correct writing is a must. You will constantly be asked, for example, to write memos to colleagues and reports and proposals for superiors and clients. Poor writing prevents good ideas from being disseminated.

   There is more on how to write well in the term paper instructions. Let me just add to that by saying the best writers are the most voracious readers. So read, read, read! And read good stuff. Of course, do the reading for this course, but also read novels, biographies, histories and good journalism—such as the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New Yorker*. 
(B) Analytical. To be a player in this economy, you can no longer just be good at taking orders and regurgitating facts. We have machines to do that now. You need to be able to take information and add value to it by using analysis. What do this year’s sales figures, the state of the economy and your competitors current production woes (three pieces of factual information) tell you about how many dollars worth of raw materials your company should buy next year?

Political science is a great training device for this because it is a social science. As I mentioned under Purpose 1, it is a discipline that forces you to not only collect information, but evaluate it too.

(C) Experiential/Vocational. Understanding theory is a prerequisite for success in today’s economy, but you need to have real-life experiences as well. This is no less true for people who want political careers in government, campaigns, think tanks, lobbying, polling and consultancy etc.. I’ve worked on campaigns and on Capitol Hill and can tell you that although the classroom prepared me for a lot of what did happen, many things caught me by surprise. I’ll give you all the academic stuff in this class, but we’ll also talk about “the real world” too.

**Integrity Statement**

You are advised to check the university’s policies with regards to academic integrity because they apply in this class (even though this class is a little different from a conventional one). I have zero tolerance for cheating and will fail any student who cheats. The student will also be subject to further administrative disciplinary action. Students are expected to work within the letter and spirit of the university Student Code of Conduct. (See [http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/ncsulegal/41.03-codeof.htm](http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/ncsulegal/41.03-codeof.htm). Plagiarism is considered to be cheating. It will result in a penalty ranging from a 0 for the assignment to an F for the course. I may also report you to university authorities. Unfortunately, I see it more frequently in the distance education classes. Please, please do not be tempted to plagiarize.

Copying from the text, the Internet, or other sources is considered plagiarism. You must use your own words so that I know you understand the material. If I suspect but cannot prove plagiarism, I may ask you to come in to my office or call me so we can discuss your work. I’ll then be able to ascertain that you really understand what you are writing.

**Students With Disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must register with Disability Services for Students at 1900 Student Health Center, Campus Box 7509, 515-7653. ([http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/offices/affirm_action/dss/](http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/offices/affirm_action/dss/)). For more information on NC State's policy on working with students with disabilities, please see: [http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/hat/current/appendix/appen_k.html](http://www.ncsu.edu/provost/hat/current/appendix/appen_k.html)

**Additional Advice and Course Policies**

Again, this course requires self-discipline. You must be able to work under deadlines but without someone hounding you continually. You must keep up with material without having class several times a week. *If you do not have this kind of personality, you should not take this class.* Other things:

(1) Pick up the books from the bookstore asap.
(2) Pick up the DVDs from the bookstore or download podcasts of the lectures. The podcasts can be found from a link on the course website.

(3) Please read carefully and closely follow the instructions for assignments. **Note the due dates.** Unless I hear about extenuating circumstances, assignments will be marked down a grade (e.g. a B+ becomes a B) for every day that they are late. You need to make deadlines.

(4) You may submit assignments electronically, in person or by regular mail. If you do it in person, please place in the department drop box, put in my mailbox in the department or come and knock on my office door. Secretaries will not confirm receipt, so you might want to follow up with me to see if I received it should you have to put it in a box. You might also want to call me to inform me of when it was placed there. If you send by regular mail, I will note the assignment as handed in on the date of the postmark. Please do not fax assignments.

(5) You are responsible for the safe arrival of your assignments. I will not acknowledge receipt immediately unless you explicitly ask me for it. Check with me quickly if you are worried that I might not have received an assignment. Please do not come to me at the end of the semester to try and tell me things must have got lost in the mail or cyberspace.

(6) You will receive your graded assignments in the mail from me soon after I receive them (usually two weeks after receipt at the latest).

(7) You are responsible for providing a correct, up-to-date e-mail and regular mail addresses and phone numbers. The e-mail I have on file is the one you give distance ed and Registration and Records. If any of this changes, please make sure it is updated with the university. You can make changes at [http://www.ncsu.edu/directory/](http://www.ncsu.edu/directory/) and by scrolling down to “Related Tools” and clicking on the appropriate “Updating” link. Search the university directory for yourself if you are not sure what information we have on file for you.

(8) Please type and double-space all of your assignments. Staple them, too, if you’re sending by regular mail. And make sure your name is on them.

(9) If you want full credit for a late assignment, I will need appropriate documentation. If it is a health issue, appropriate documentation from Student Health Services, Counseling or an M.D. is usually sufficient. If it is a family issue, please obtain verification from Parent and Constituent Services.

(10) The library provides tremendous service to distance education students. They can deliver books by 2-day FedEx and articles in electronic form to your computer. See: [www.lib.ncsu.edu/distance](http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/distance)

(11) Feel free to e-mail, call or make an appointment to see me. I’m happy to talk with you whenever I can.
Assignments and Grades

The assignments in this class reflect the course’s purposes. They teach and test knowledge of the subject matter and the four practical skills described above. They are:

- 3 papers (see handout)          20% each
- Final exam                      20%
- Social science project proposal (see handout) 10%
- Biography of Member of Congress (see handout) 10%

Deadlines for Assignments:

Assignments will be deducted a grade for each day that they are late (i.e. a B+ becomes a B etc.). The deadlines (except for exams, see schedule) are as follows:

- Papers                         6/9, 7/2, 8/6
- Political science project proposal 7/21
- Biography of a Member of Congress 6/21
- Final (cumulative; short identifications; it will be e-mailed 8/4) 8/11

Grading:

This class is graded on a +/- scale. Total scores ending in the digits 7,8,9= +; 3,4,5,6= the flat grade; 0,1,2= -. A is in the 90s, B in the 80s, C in the 70s, D in the 60s, 59 and below is an F. I round .5 up, <.5 down.

Reading

There are also two books that you must purchase:


Schedule

(Assigned reading code: D&O=Congress and Its Members, E&W=Presidential Leadership). This is a very rough schedule. Please make sure you follow along closely.
I. FOUNDATIONS

Class 1. Introduction (E&W Appendix A; D&O Chapter 1)

Classes 2-3 The Constitutional Setting  (E&W Chapter 1)

4-8 The Evolution of the Modern Presidency (E&W Chapter 1)

9-10 The Evolution of the Modern Congress (D&O Chapter 2)

II. THE PRESIDENCY, CONGRESS, AND DEMOCRACY

11-15 The Presidential Selection Process  (E&W Chapters 2&3)

16 The President, The Public, and Governing  (E&W Chapters 4&5)

17-19 Congressional Elections  (D&O Chapters 3&4)

20-22 Congress, The Public, and Governing  (D&O Chapters 5&13)

III. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

23-26 The Presidency

Congress  (a) 27-29  Leaders and Parties  
(D&O Chapter 6)

(b) 30-32 Committees  
(D&O Chapter 7)

IV. INTERBRANCH RELATIONSHIPS

33-34 President and Congress (D&O Chapters 10&11; E&W Chapter 10)

35 The Elected Branches and the Courts (E&W Chapter 11; Chapter 12)

V. NATIONAL POLICY MAKING

36-39 The Process  (D&O Chapters 8 and 9)