A. Introduction

“To get anything done in Congress, one has to understand the players and what motivates them, as well as who can deliver and who can be trusted. No expert can teach those things; they have to be learned and practiced on the job.”

John Hiley, Chief Legislative Lobbyist for Present Clinton

This course is an introduction to the legislative process and operations of the U.S. Congress. The class will focus on a semester-long legislative simulation in which students play the role of United States Senators. Students will organize the legislature, form parties and caucuses, select their own leaders, draft their own legislation, debate, and vote on that legislation. The first few weeks will be basic lectures to introduce how Congress works, and for the rest of the semester most days will be devoted to the legislative simulation.

B. Course Objectives

Through this course students will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the inner workings and political dynamics of the U.S. Congress. By the end of the course, students should develop an appreciation for the complexities of representing a broad and diverse constituency, the importance of agenda setting, the power and necessity of compromise, the value of informed persuasion, and the critical role of trust and cooperation in the legislative process.

Over the course of the semester students should:

- Become an effective representative and legislator
- Demonstrate an appreciation of
  - the role of Congress in lawmaking and society
  - the goals and constraints shaping legislative behavior (esp. electoral)
  - the legislative process, its logic, and the potential implications of reforms
  - the value of information and the importance of agenda setting in policymaking
- Improved communication and listening skills
- Improved collaborative skills
- Improved ability to plan and execute a strategy

C. Course Materials

LegSim online registration ($16, nonrefundable)
D. Student Responsibilities and Grades

Each student is required to complete each of the following assignments:

1. (5 pts): Profile
2. (5 pts): Legislative Agenda
3. (5 pts): Committee Research Report
4. (5 pts): Major Bill
5. (25 pts): Reelection Strategy Memo

Each student must also complete 3 of the following elective assignments (in any combination, including repeating the same assignment for a different bill):

A. (5 pts): Additional Major Bill
B. (5 pts): Committee Report
C. (5 pts): Floor Manager
D. (5 pts): Debate Preparation

Students will also be evaluated based on:

1. (5 pts): Quiz on House and Senate Procedure
2. (5 pts): Between 1 and 3 Pop Quizzes on Reading
3. (10 pts): Participation (attendance and involvement)
4. (10 pts): Socratic Discussion
5. (10 pts): Reelection Tasks

Class Participation: Regular attendance and participation are absolutely essential to make a simulation-based course work. Your contributions to in-class activities not only provide opportunities for learning and evaluation, they also help other students learn. Accordingly, students will be evaluated based on frequency and quality of in-class participation.

Socratic Discussion: At the beginning of lecture days I will randomly select one or two students to engage in a Socratic style discussion during the class period, during which I will question the students about their understanding and opinion of the reading. Students selected to perform will be expected to have a strong knowledge of the day’s reading and will be evaluated accordingly. Any student not prepared to discuss the reading must take a pass; absent students will automatically take a pass. Passes will negatively affect your Socratic Discussion grade. Near the end of the class, I will usually encourage a general class discussion on the day’s reading.

Reelection Tasks: See the Reelection Tasks sheet for a description of how to earn these points as well as possible bonus points.

More information regarding each assignment is provided in the Legislative Process Assignments Handout. Written material will be evaluated based on writing quality, organizational structure, logical clarity, and a demonstrated understanding of course material. Students are required to meet all deadlines for course material. Assignments are due at 11 a.m. on the date indicated on the syllabus. Written material submitted within 24 hours of the deadline will be accepted with a 10% grade reduction. WRITTEN MATERIAL WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER THE DEADLINE!
All students are required to fill out a course evaluation at the end of the semester.

**Office Hours:** Dr. Hall’s office is located in McGannon 154. Office Hours are on Wednesday from 2-4 p.m. and by appointment.

**Academic Honesty Statement**
The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic failing grade for the course and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml

**Students with Special Needs - Disability Services**
Any student who feels that he/she may need academic accommodations in order to meet the requirements of this course—as outlined in the syllabus, due to presence of a disability, should contact the Office of Disabilities Services. Please telephone the office at 314-977-2930, or visit Room 131 in the Academic Resources Center, 3840 Lindell Blvd. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

**Arts & Sciences Grading Scale**
The Arts & Sciences Grading Scale can be accessed at: http://www.slu.edu/x6352.xml
Grade Points: A 4.0, A- 3.7, B+ 3.3, B 3.0, B- 2.7, C+ 2.3, C 2.0, C- 1.7, D 1.0, F 0.0

Course grading scale:
A: 93-100, A-: 90-92, B+: 87-89, B: 83-86, B-: 80-82, C+: 77-79, C: 73-76, C-: 70-72, D: 60-70, F: below 60

**D. Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1: In Search of the Two Congresses**

**Wednesday, January 18:** CM Ch. 1, The Two Congresses

**Friday, January 20:** CM Ch. 2, Evolution of the Modern Congress

**Week 2: Congress as Ambassadors**

**Monday, January 23:** CM Ch. 3, Going for It: Recruitment and Candidacy
Wednesday, January 25: CM Ch. 4, Making It: The Electoral Game

Friday, January 27: CM Ch. 5, Being There: Hill Styles and Home Styles
ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE: Profile

Week 3: A Deliberative Assembly of One Nation

Monday, January 30: CM Ch. 6, Leaders and Parties in Congress

Wednesday, February 1: New Member Reception & Organizational Meeting
This is your first real opportunity to get to know your colleagues. It is an opportunity to seek out lawmakers with common concerns, or to establish lines of communication with colleagues who may provide critical support in the future. In addition, we'll hear from candidates for the leadership and begin a discussion of how to elect the leadership. By now you should appreciate the importance of these decisions for your own goals.
READING: Profiles of all other Senators

Friday, February 3: CM Ch. 7, Committees: Workshops of Congress

Week 4: A Deliberative Assembly of One Nation, cont.

Monday, February 6: CM Ch. 8, Caucus Meetings and Leadership Elections
The party caucuses will meet and elect the leadership. The caucuses may need to discuss which committees to form, how to assign committee members, and how to select committee chairs, or simply delegate these decisions to the newly elected leadership. The caucuses should also discuss policy priorities for the upcoming session and make recommendations on the formation of committees. After the meeting, the leadership will meet with Dr. Hall to discuss committee assignments and procedural matters.
ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE: Legislative Agenda

Wednesday, February 8: Congressional Rules and Procedures
LEADERSHIP: Assign Senators to Committees

Friday, February 10: Committee Meetings
Committees will meet for the first time. The committees may elect chairs (depending on the chair selection process). They will also begin work on the committee research assignment.

Week 5: A Deliberative Assembly of One Nation, cont.

Monday, February 13: CM Ch. 9, Decision Making in Congress
QUIZ ON HOUSE AND SENATE PROCEDURE

Wednesday, February 15: Committee Meetings
Committees will meet to complete the committee research assignment and begin discussing specific ideas for legislation. Each member of the committee should bring an idea for a bill to the committee.

Friday, February 17: CM Ch. 14, Congress, Budgets, and Domestic Policymaking

Week 6: Policy Making and Change in the Two Congresses
Monday, February 20: The Politics of the Budget
ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE: Committee Research Report

Wednesday, February 22: Balance the Budget Exercise
ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE: Major Bill

Friday, February 24: Committee Meetings
Committees will meet to consider referred legislation for the first time. For the rest of the semester, most class periods will be devoted to LegSim. Each of these days will include either committee meetings, caucus meetings, meetings of the full chamber, or some combination. Each Friday, the majority leader, in consultation with the leadership, will set the agenda for the following week.

Week 7: Policy Making and Change in the Two Congresses, cont.

Monday, February 27: CM Ch. 10, Congress and the President

Wednesday, February 29: LegSim

Friday, March 2: LegSim

Week 8:

Monday, March 5: CM Ch. 11, Congress and the Bureaucracy

Wednesday, March 7: LegSim

Friday, March 9: LegSim

Spring Break (March 12-17)

Week 9:

Monday, March 19: NO CLASS

Wednesday, March 21: LegSim

Friday, March 23: LegSim

Week 10:

Monday, March 26: CM Ch. 12, Congress and the Courts

Wednesday, March 28: LegSim

Friday, March 30: LegSim

Week 11:
Monday, April 2: CM Ch. 13, Congress and Organized Interests

Wednesday, April 4: Caucus Meetings for New Leadership Elections

Friday, April 6: NO CLASS, Good Friday LegSim

**Week 12:**

Monday, April 9: NO CLASS, Easter Monday

Wednesday, April 11: LegSim

Friday, April 13: LegSim

**Week 13:**

Monday, April 16: CM Ch. 15, Congress and National Security Policies

ELECTIVE ASSIGNMENT A DUE: Additional Major Bill

Wednesday, April 18: LegSim

Friday, April 20: LegSim

**Week 14:**

Monday, April 23: CM Ch. 16, The Two Congresses and the American People

Wednesday, April 25: LegSim

Friday, April 27: LegSim

**Week 15:**

Monday, April 30: LegSim

Wednesday, May 2: LegSim

Friday, May 4: LegSim

**Week 16:**

Monday, May 7: Conclusion

ASSIGNMENT 5 DUE: Reelection Strategy Memo