

## **PSCI-3041-001: THE AMERICAN CONGRESS**

Hellums 141

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2:30 PM - 03:20 PM

### **Instructor Contact Information**

Instructor – Michael D Kanner

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Office - KTCH 128

Office hours – Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10:30 to 11:30 AM (or by appointment)

### **Communication Policies**

The best way to contact me is by email. My typical response time is 8 to 12 hours (although it may be an acknowledgment).

### **Instructor Biography**

I have been a lecturer and instructor in political science and international affairs since 2001 and have taught most international relations subjects, from security to economics. My bachelor's degree was in science from the U.S. Military Academy with a concentration in engineering. I also have a master's in managerial science from Troy State University, international relations from Salve Regina University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, Boulder. I focused on political psychology and its effect on foreign policy decision-making.

Before joining academia, I served in the U.S. Army, including assignments as an operations officer and analyst from brigade to theater army level in the United States, Latin America and Europe. I also spent a short time as a contract employee for SAIC, a think tank working for the Defense Department. My activity as an analyst included studies on expert decision-making, low-intensity conflict, and preventive diplomacy.

My approach to Congress is to view it as a decision-making body and its members as rational actors. That means they have party and personal goals that influence their behavior and public policy.

### **Course Description** (from course catalog)

Provides intensive examination of the role of Congress in American government, including congressional elections, representation, the organization of Congress, and congressional policymaking. Examines larger context of congressional politics, including political parties, the president, and interest groups. Prereq., PSCI 1101

## Objectives

1. Identify the constitutional and informal powers of Congress.
2. Discuss the factors in congressional campaigns and elections.
3. Examine the role of political parties and party leadership in Congress.
4. Explain how committees and rules affect legislation.
5. Relate how Congress interacts with the president, the bureaucracy, and the courts.
6. Describe how policy is developed.

## Overview

There is a reading assigned for each day except for an exam. These should be read in advance of the class. The reading comes from either the textbook or an article you will need to access on Canvas. Articles on Canvas are linked to the day they will be discussed.

Classes will start with administrative announcements (if any) and any political news that I think relates to the course. There will then be a short discussion of the news. After that, I will briefly talk about the day's readings. These talks are not summaries. Instead, they will highlight sections of the readings and add historical and theoretical aspects to them. I sometimes interrupt my talk to ask for opinions or prompt a discussion. You are expected to contribute with questions and comments during these talks and after

## Student Responsibilities

Your first responsibility is to show up.

Readings and course notes are only part of the course. Additional material will be presented in the lectures. Therefore, the most benefit will come from participating in class discussions.

Be prepared to participate.

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are part of an intellectual journey. You will be asked to offer and defend positions about the topics we discuss. I believe the only way to sharpen an argument is to grind away at it; you can expect me to criticize your position.

I am offering these warnings because this is not typical in many classes.

- Your defense should be based on theory or history. Arguments built on beliefs or moral positions are subjective and assume a universality of views that may only result from cultural hegemony.
- If you are not prepared to question your fundamental beliefs about the government and policy, this is not the class for you.
- Do NOT take it personally. I have been known to criticize positions with which I agreed.
- *Ad Hominem* attacks will not be tolerated. Criticisms should be based on counterarguments or counterfactuals and not the status of the individual making the

argument. Violators will be warned. Persistent violators will be asked not to attend class. These will count as unexcused, missed classes.

Be on time.

Late arrivals disrupt the class. I also consider lateness a sign of disrespect to other students because it says that your convenience is more important than their desire to learn.

Keep up with the news.

To paraphrase Shakespeare, 'There are more things in heaven and earth than show up in your newsfeed.' The political landscape changes every day. You should be familiar with these changes.

There are several sources of news. Here are some of my recommendations.

- The Hill - <https://thehill.com/> - The Hill's focus is on what is going on in Washington, D.C. It is free to subscribe to and select specific newsletters (<http://www.email.thehill.com/thehillreg/thehillreg/pref.action>).
- The Wall Street Journal. As University students, you also have free access to The Wall Street Journal. You can go to <https://libguides.colorado.edu/databaseguide/wallstreetjournal/home> for information on how to access it.
- The New York Times. You also have access to the New York Times through the library. Information on how to activate this account is at <https://libguides.colorado.edu/databaseguide/newyorktimes/home>.

**Required Texts (do NOT use earlier editions)**

There are two texts required for this class.

Davidson, Roger H.; Walter J. Oleszek, Francis E. Lee and Eric Schickler. 2022. *Congress and Its Members, 18<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Washington, D.C. Sage/CQ Press.

Dodd, Lawrence C. and Bruce I Oppenheimer. 2021. *Congress Reconsidered, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Washington, D.C. Sage/CQ Press.

Both are available through the CU Bookstore in hard copy and the "Day 1 Digital Access" program. If you buy it somewhere else (e.g., Amazon), ensure you have the correct edition.

Day 1 Digital Access

To keep the cost of your course materials *as low as possible* and access to those materials *as convenient as possible*, we have collaborated with the CU Book Store and the publisher to deliver those materials through a program called "Day 1 Digital Access", which will appear on your tuition and fee bill as "Day 1 Digital Access".

What does this mean for you?

1. You will receive access to all your course materials digitally, on the first day of classes, through the course Canvas page.
2. You will see a "Day 1 Digital Access" charge on your tuition and fee bill
  - a. Congress and Its Members (180-day) \$??.??
  - b. Congress Reconsidered (180-day) \$??.??
  - c. Student price (before tax): \$??.??.
3. This is a guaranteed lowest price, discounted by the publisher, and not available outside this course
4. **You have the option to opt out.** This means you won't pay for anything, but you lose all access to the course materials, including homework managers like Connect or Mindtap.
  - a. You can opt-out by using a link in a reminder email you will receive with the subject heading "Day 1 Digital Access".
  - b. **You must opt-out no later than ?????????**, otherwise you will be charged for the materials.
5. Please keep in mind that "opting out" means that your access to these materials will be turned **OFF**, and you will have no way to complete assignments.

#### Troubleshooting tips from VitalSource:

VitalSource Support: <https://support.vitalsource.com/hc/en-us>

Email: [support@vitalsource.com](mailto:support@vitalsource.com)

Call: 1-855-200-4146

VitalSource Support is available 24/7 and can troubleshoot most issues

If you have questions about **BILLING**, email: [digital@cupbookstore.com](mailto:digital@cupbookstore.com)

#### **Grading Criteria**

Your final grade will be based on how many points you accrue and this grading scale. I will post your Final Grade on CANVAS before posting it to the Registrar's office.

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59
A-	90-93	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

Grades are based on these components.

Module Exams – 2 at 24 points each	48 points
Final Exam	36 points
Attendance	16 points
Total	100 points

### Module Exams.

There will be three exams (this includes the final). The first two will consist of five questions, from which students will select four. The final will consist of eight questions, from which students will choose six.

Please let me know if you have an approved accommodation from Disability Services (<https://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/>). If you are planning on requesting accommodation, I recommend doing it as soon as possible.

### Attendance.

Absences will only be excused based on illness, incarceration, religious observation, work/sports/ROTC commitments, or family emergencies. Documentation for the absence may be requested. Attendance will not be taken until we start in-person classes.

### **Course Outline and Schedule.**

Pay attention to the chapter numbers for Congress reconsidered because we will not be reading in the order in which the book is organized.

Reading assignments that need to be downloaded are listed as Canvas: [Author Name].

### Module 1. Powers and Campaigns

Objective - Identify the constitutional and informal powers of Congress.

Objective - Discuss the factors in congressional campaigns and elections.

1. January 18
  - a. Objective – familiarize students with the course requirements.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Syllabus
2. January 20
  - a. Objective – recognize the paradoxes in Congress and the problems they cause.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 1
3. January 23
  - a. Objective – discuss constituent expectations.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Lapinski
4. January 25
  - a. Objective – identify the origins and expansion of congressional power.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 2
5. January 27
  - a. Objective – examine the effect of institutional reforms on the performance of Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Chergosky

6. January 30
  - a. Objective – review the factors in candidate selection.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 3
7. February 1
  - a. Objective – examine why individuals decide to run for office.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Maisel
8. February 3
  - a. Objective – discuss how gender affects congressional elections.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 5
9. February 6
  - a. Objective – identify campaign tactics.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 4
10. February 8
  - a. Objective – examine the role of issues on campaigns and governing.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 3
11. February 10
  - a. Objective – examine the impact of local economic conditions on voter choice.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Ragusa
12. February 13
  - a. Objective – examine the influence of donors on polarization.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Kujala
13. February 15
  - a. Objective – recognize the different roles and public persona of congressional members.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 5

**February 17 – Midterm 1 – Review to be published.**

Module 2. Congressional Operations

Objective – Examine the role of political parties and party leadership in Congress.

Objective – Explain how committees and rules affect legislation.

14. February 20
  - a. Objective – identify the role of leaders in Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 6
15. February 22
  - a. Objective – compare theories of congressional leadership.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 7
16. February 24
  - a. Objective – discuss the effect of intraparty polarization.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 8
17. February 27
  - a. Objective – examine the effect of ideology on legislative effectiveness.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 14

18. March 1
  - a. Objective – describe the workings of the committee system.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 7
19. March 3
  - a. Objective – recognize how rules are used to exercise and maintain power.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 8
20. March 6
  - a. Objective – recognize the dynamics of voting in Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 9
21. March 8
  - a. Objective – identify long-term Congressional behavioral patterns.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 11
22. March 10
  - a. Objective – outline issues in legislating under a divided and united government.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 9
23. March 13
  - a. Objective – recognize different congressional styles.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 12
24. March 15
  - a. Objective – identify changes within the Senate practices.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 1

**March 17 – Midterm 2 – Review to be published.**

Module 3. Congressional Relations with Others

Objective – Relate how Congress interacts with the president, the bureaucracy, and the courts.

Objective – Describe how policy is developed.

25. March 20
  - a. Objective – compare the position of the president and Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 10
26. March 22
  - a. Objective – examine the effect of ideology within Senate committees.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 14
27. March 24
  - a. Objective – explore the effect of polarization on policy.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 16

**Spring Break – March 27-31, 2023**

28. April 3
  - a. Objective – review the means of congressional control.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 11

29. April 5
  - a. Objective – discuss the principal-agent problem between Congress and agencies.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: MacDonald
30. April 7
  - a. Objective – recognize the relationship between Congress and the Court System.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 12
31. April 10
  - a. Objective – explain how procedural changes affect Senate approval of judicial nominations.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 10
32. April 12
  - a. Objective – examine the role of interest groups and lobbyists in Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 13
33. April 14
  - a. Objective – review changes in lobbying practices.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: CQ Lobbying
34. April 17
  - a. Objective – examine policymaking in Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 14
35. April 19
  - a. Objective – explain the relationship between congressional politics and budget authority.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 13
36. April 21
  - a. Objective – explore polarization and the Senate budget process.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Bafumi
37. April 24
  - a. Objective – discuss Congress's role in security policy.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 15
38. April 26
  - a. Objective – discuss the relationship between military experience and security decision-making by members of Congress.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Lupton
39. April 28
  - a. Objective – review differences in presidential war-making powers.
  - b. Reading Assignment – Canvas: Burns
40. May 1
  - a. Objective – analyze the 2020 Congressional elections.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress Reconsidered*, Chapter 17
41. May 3
  - a. Objective – assess Congress and its members.
  - b. Reading Assignment – *Congress and Its Members*, Chapter 17

**Final Exam – TBA – Review to be published**



**Policies** (as established by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education)

SYLLABUS STATEMENTS

Classroom Behavior

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. For more information, see the [classroom behavior](#) policy, the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

Requirements for COVID-19

As a matter of public health and safety, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. CU Boulder currently requires COVID-19 vaccination and boosters for all faculty, staff and students. Students, faculty and staff must upload proof of vaccination and boosters or file for an exemption based on medical, ethical or moral grounds through the MyCUHealth portal.

The CU Boulder campus is currently mask-optional. However, if public health conditions change and masks are again required in classrooms, students who fail to adhere to masking requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the "Accommodation for Disabilities" statement on this syllabus.

If you feel ill and think you might have COVID-19, if you have tested positive for COVID-19, or if you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should stay home and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office ([contacttracing@colorado.edu](mailto:contacttracing@colorado.edu)). If you are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay home; rather, you should self-monitor for symptoms and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office ([contacttracing@colorado.edu](mailto:contacttracing@colorado.edu)). {Faculty: insert your procedure here for students to alert you about absence due to illness or quarantine. Because of FERPA student privacy laws, do not require students to state the nature of their illness when alerting you. Do not require "doctor's notes" for classes missed due to illness; campus health services no longer provide "doctor's notes" or appointment verifications.}

### Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or [dsinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:dsinfo@colorado.edu) for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

### Preferred Student Names and Pronouns

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

### Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the [Honor Code](#). Violations of the Honor Code may include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu)); 303-492-5550). Students found responsible for violating the [Honor Code](#) will be assigned resolution outcomes from the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution as well as be subject to academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found on the [Honor Code website](#).

### Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination and harassment, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email [cureport@colorado.edu](mailto:cureport@colorado.edu). Information about university policies, [reporting options](#), and support resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when they are made aware of any issues related to these policies regardless of when or where they occurred to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and resolution options. To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit [Don't Ignore It](#).

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, email the instructor at [Michael.kanner@colorado.edu](mailto:Michael.kanner@colorado.edu) about the days you will miss.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.