

# POLITICAL SCIENCE 312: THE U.S. CONGRESS

## FALL 2017

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**CLASS MEETING:** Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 11:30-12:20 in Anderson 100

**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesdays 10:00-11:30 am, Wednesdays 2:00-4:00 pm, and by appointment

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Almost everyone has an opinion regarding the U.S. Congress and many of those opinions are negative...Members of Congress are liars, cheats, or just plain lazy. Most people also have an opinion on the various bills Congress produces, or fails to produce. What many people lack, however, is an understanding of the process by which ideas become law and the role played by Members of Congress in this process.

In this course, we study the institution of Congress in great detail. We learn about the formal structure of Congress, identify the constraints and challenges faced by Members of Congress, explore the nuances of the legislative process, and discuss the concept of “good” representation. In these ways, this course is quite similar to many other college courses on the topic. However, in our course, you will explore these topics, ideas, and concepts through the eyes of a Member of Congress.

Throughout this semester, we experience the legislative process using a web-based Congressional simulation program called LEGSIM. This course requires you to think beyond the traditional four walls of the classroom as you explore the workings of Congress. At times it will be frustrating, at times exciting; whatever your reaction at the moment, I know that you will learn more than you could from a basic lecture format. I encourage you to enter this class with a positive attitude and adventurous spirit.

### TEXTBOOKS & COURSE MATERIAL

- *Congress and Its Members, 16<sup>th</sup> Edition* by Davidson, Oleszek, Lee, and Schickler (2018)
- Registration with LEGSIM. It will cost \$16 to register for LEGSIM and you must pay with a credit card.
- Selected readings available on Moodle reserve (please print and bring to class).

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course is designed to address three student learning outcomes identified by the Department of Political Science:

1. Students will be able to identify and analyze key political institutions, processes, and issues at the national level.
2. Students will be able to evaluate political arguments, identifying underlying assumptions and the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments presented
3. Students will make arguments that are cogent, compelling, and well-substantiated

This course also addresses two Institutional Student Learning Outcomes identified by the College:

1. Cognitive Practice: Students will thoughtfully analyze enduring and contemporary questions from multiple perspectives, will independently develop original and creative solutions to complex problems, and will support their reasoning while considering other possibilities
2. Intellectual Capacities: Students will demonstrate the ability to understand and communicate effectively across a variety of modes, including written, oral, and visual.

## GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Grades in this course are based on writing assignments, quizzes, and class participation. Full descriptions of all assignments are listed at the end of the syllabus.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Member briefs (10 @ 6% each)	60%	Fridays
Quizzes (4 @ 5% each)	20%	9/20, 10/11, 11/20, 12/19
Final Report	10%	11/29
Participation	10%	Throughout

**Member Briefs:** 10 short (2 single-spaced pages maximum) essays submitted on Fridays throughout the semester. These essays are designed to build your skill in evaluating and synthesizing complex information related to the operation of Congress and public policy issues. You must submit at least five Member Briefs by October 20.

**Quizzes:** 4 short quizzes comprised of 20 multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank questions to assess your comprehension of the readings. Use of notes is permitted.

**Final Report:** 6-8 page analysis of key activity in the simulation, drawing connections between readings and the simulation.

**Participation:** Your participation is an integral part of this class. Participation includes attending class and being on time (obviously, you can't participate if you're not here), completing the assigned readings before class, contributing to class discussions with thoughtful comments, listening attentively, and being a rigorous and consistent participant in the online simulation.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance:** You are an adult and therefore you do not need to notify me when you miss class or explain your absences to me, but please do not send me an email asking if you "missed anything important in class"! If you miss class for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact a classmate for notes. If you have any questions about your notes, please see me during my office hours. Missing more than **three** classes during the semester *will negatively affect your participation grade* regardless of the reasons for the absences. Missing more than **six** classes during the semester may result in an F for the course.

**Academic Honesty:** Gustavus Adolphus College standards for academic honesty apply in this class. If you have questions about these standards, please consult the College Honor Code. Your decision to remain enrolled in this class will serve as your agreement to abide by the following statement for each assignment you submit: "*On my honor, I pledge that I have not given, received, or tolerated others' use of unauthorized aid in completing this work.*" Plagiarism—using the words or ideas of someone else without attribution--will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Any thoughts or ideas that are not your own, even if you are not directly quoting a source must be attributed to their source through in-text citations. When in doubt, over-cite. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, consult section 39 in *The Easy Writer* or come and talk to me. Plagiarized work will be given a zero, cases will be reported to the dean, and the incident may result in failure of the course.

**Classroom Distractions:** Turn off your electronic devices before discussion-based classes. Some people like to take notes on a laptop, but having a laptop open creates a physical barrier in the classroom that impedes discussion. It also creates temptation to engage in non-class related internet use, which is a distraction to everyone in the class. Unless you have a documented need for a laptop, please leave it in your bag during class. If a cell phones rings during class time, the owner will be asked to bring a treat to share with the entire class during our next meeting to compensate us for the distraction. It should go without saying that you should not be texting during class time. During the simulation, the chamber gets to set the policy for electronics use.

**Grade Dispute:** I am happy to meet with you to clarify feedback I give you on any coursework. It is important to me that you understand why you received the grade you did and that you are able to use feedback constructively to improve on future assignments. Any formal grade disputes must be submitted in writing to me no later than two weeks after the assignment is returned.

**Late Paper Penalty:** Assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each day (or portion thereof) they are late (A- becomes B+, etc.).

**Multilingual Learners:** Support for English learners and multilingual students is available through the Center for International and Cultural Education's (<https://gustavus.edu/cice/>) Multilingual and Intercultural Program Coordinator (MIPC), Carly Houston Overfelt. The MIPC can meet individually with students for tutoring in writing, consulting about academic tasks, and helping students connect with the College's support systems. In addition, English learners and multilingual students can seek help from peer tutors in the Writing Center (<https://gustavus.edu/writingcenter/>).

**Special Accommodations:** Gustavus Adolphus College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability, or you think you may have a disability of any nature (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical) and, as a result, need reasonable academic accommodation to participate in class, take tests or benefit from the College's services, then you should speak with the Accessibility Resources staff, for a confidential discussion of your needs and appropriate plans. Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course outcomes. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively; therefore, to maximize your academic success at Gustavus, please contact Accessibility Resources as early as possible. Accessibility Resources (<https://gustavus.edu/advising/disability/>) is located in the Center for Academic Resources and Enhancement. Accessibility Resources Coordinator, Kelly Karstad, ([kkarstad@gustavus.edu](mailto:kkarstad@gustavus.edu) or x7138), can provide further information.

**Things I Value:** To clarify my own expectations for your work this semester, here is a list of three things I value in the educational process:

- Effectively working with others: I believe that learning how to work as a part of a team is one of the most important skills a person can learn. This means learning how to play a healthy role in the group, being neither "the person who does everything" nor "the person who is dead weight." This requires some self-reflection on your part.
- Creativity and risk taking: I appreciate creative approaches to thought, research, and presentations. This involves creative problem-solving to research challenges and the willingness to take risks in your thinking.
- Intellectual curiosity: College is an opportunity to explore interesting questions simply for the sake of learning something new. I value this process of learning for the sake of learning (rather than learning for the sake of getting a good job or getting a good grade on an exam). This involves being willing to ask and wrestle with questions that go beyond what might be on a test. In particular, it involves taking the initiative to pursue ideas and concepts that are particularly interesting to you.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Week 1

**For reflection:** What kinds of policy issues are you most passionate about? What are the areas where you have existing knowledge? What areas would you like to learn more about this semester?

Wednesday, September 6: Welcome to U.S. Congress!

Friday, September 8: An introduction to Congress

**Read:** DOLS 1; Mayhew (Moodle)

**Due: *Member Brief***

### Week 2

**For reflection:** What state would you like to represent in the simulation? It may be helpful to pick a state with interests related to the policy issues you care most about.

Monday, September 11: The structure of Congress

**Read:** DOLS 2

**In Class:** Explanation of LEGSIM and district profile preferences

Wednesday, September 13: The structure of Congress

**Read:** Article II of the U.S. Constitution

Friday, September 15: Congressional districts and recruitment

**Read:** DOLS 3

**In Class:** Election Day (state selection process for the simulation)

**Due: *Member Brief***

### Week 3

***By Friday, you should have created your legislative profile on LEGSIM.***

Monday, September 18: Congressional campaigns and elections

**Read:** DOLS 4

Wednesday, September 20:

**Read:** News articles TBA

**In Class: Quiz #1** (DOLS 1-4, Mayhew, Article II)

Friday, September 22: Congressional Styles

**Read:** DOLS 5

**Due: *Member Brief***

## Week 4

**For reflection:** Consider the type of representative you plan to be drawing upon the theoretical material presented in the course readings. Based on your own political predispositions and issue interests and the political makeup of the district you represent, what model of representation best describes your approach? What roles (both in terms of leadership positions and committee assignments) will you pursue in an attempt to both represent your constituents and pursue your own policy and ideological goals?

Monday, September 25: Leaders and parties

**Read:** DOLS 6

Wednesday, September 27: Strategies for coalition leaders

**Read:** Arnold (Moodle)

Friday, September 29: New Member Reception and Leadership Elections

**Due: *Member Brief***

## Week 5

***By Friday, all committee assignments should be made.***

**For reflection:** The process of selecting leaders in Congress is as complicated and controversial as almost any policy discussion. How did the processes of selecting leaders in this Congress compare with processes in the actual Congress? What are the primary similarities and differences? Are these differences significant? How do the processes used to select leaders impact the type of person that is selected? In what ways do/will leaders impact the behavior of Congress (in terms of both policy and tone) and on the function of committees?

Monday, October 2: Committees

**Read:** DOLS 7

Wednesday, October 4: No Class—Nobel Conference

Friday, October 6: Congressional rules and procedures

**Read:** DOLS 8

**Due: *Member Brief***

## Week 6

***By Friday, everyone should have submitted at least one bill to LEGSIM.***

**For reflection:** How will you prioritize between committees? What legislative strategies are developed within committees? How will the committee structure and committee behavior impact legislative outcomes?

Monday, October 9: Congressional rules and procedures

**Read:** LEGSIM Rules of Procedure (read the version on Moodle; also available on LEGSIM website)

Wednesday, October 11: Congressional rules and procedures

**Read:** News articles TBA

**In Class: Quiz #2** (DOLS 5-8, Arnold, Rules of Procedure)

Friday, October 13: Decision making

**Read:** DOLS 9

**Due: *Member Brief***

## Week 7

**For reflection:** R. Douglas Arnold wrote, “building winning coalitions is hard work.” Identify a bill for which you have attempted to build a coalition or for which you plan to build a coalition. Consider your coalition building strategy. How and why do you expect your coalition to be successful?

Monday, October 16: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (1) (“Unstructured LEGSIM time” may be used for committee meetings, party/caucus meetings, floor proceedings, or other LEGSIM-related business at the discretion of the Speaker. If this time is not required, the Speaker should notify me a minimum of 24 hours in advance. If this time is not being used appropriately, I reserve the right to assign additional reading and supplemental assignments during these days.)

Wednesday, October 18: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (2)

Friday, October 20: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (3)

**Due: Member Brief**

## Week 8

***By the end of the week, everyone should have submitted at least two bills to LEGSIM.***

**For reflection:** Members of Congress have competing demands on their time and are asked to process complex information quickly. What demands on your time have you observed? How do you prioritize these demands? What challenges have you faced in processing complex information? How might the challenges you face compare to those of real Members of Congress?

Monday, October 23: No Class—Fall Break

Wednesday, October 25: No Class—Fall Break

Friday, October 27: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (4)

**Due: Member Brief**

## Week 9

**For reflection:** You have the luxury of debating and voting on legislation in relative seclusion. There are no constituents watching your every move on C-SPAN, flooding your inbox, or protesting in front of your office door. Consider the impact constituents and advocacy groups might have. How might their presence alter your behavior? How would you explain and justify your behavior to them?

Monday, October 30: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (5)

Wednesday, November 1: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (6)

Friday, November 3: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (7)

**Due: Member Brief**

## Week 10

**For reflection:** Consider the factors that influence Members of Congress when it comes to making voting decisions. How have these factors affected your voting decisions? How does the larger context of the debate over the bill (i.e. the committee discussions, floor debate, partisan considerations, etc.) and specific constituent-related factors affect your decision?

Monday, November 6: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (8)

Wednesday, November 8: Unstructured LEGSIM Time (9) —Last day of LEGSIM

Friday, November 10: Debriefing LEGSIM

**Due: Member Brief**

## Week 11

Monday, November 13: Congress and the President

**Read:** DOLS 10

Wednesday, November 15: Congress and the President

**Read:** News articles TBA

**In Class:** Final report discussion

Friday, November 17: Congress and the bureaucracy

**Read:** DOLS 11

**Due: Member Brief**

## Week 12

Monday, November 20: Final report discussion

**Read:** News articles TBA

**In Class: Quiz #3** (DOLS 9-11)

Wednesday, November 22: No Class—Thanksgiving

Friday, November 24: No Class—Thanksgiving

## Week 13

Monday, November 27: Congress and the courts

**Read:** DOLS 12

Wednesday, November 29: Final report sharing

**Due: Final Report**

Friday, December 1: Congress and interest groups

**Read:** DOLS 13

**Due: Member Brief**

## Week 14

Monday, December 4: Budgets and domestic policymaking

**Read:** DOLS 14

Wednesday, December 6: Budgets and domestic policymaking

**In Class:** Budget simulation

Friday, December 8: National security policy

**Read:** DOLS 15

**Due:** *Member Brief (Last opportunity to submit)*

## Week 15

Monday, December 11: Congress and foreign policy

**Read:** News articles TBA

Wednesday, December 13: Wrapping up

**Read:** DOLS 16

## Week 16

**Quiz #4** (DOLS 12-16) Available on Moodle from Monday, December 18 at 8:00 am through Tuesday, December 19 at 5:30 pm.



## AN OVERVIEW OF LEGSIM

LEGSIM is a web-based congressional simulation. My goal here is to provide you with a brief overview of the simulation, but you will learn most of it as we progress in the class. This means that you won't always have all the answers to every question, but I will help direct you to find your own answers to questions and challenges as they arise.

The simulation will be fun (it will also be frustrating at times!), but there is an educational purpose behind it as well. **Here are the primary learning goals I have for this class:**

- That you improve your **research skills** as you research topics for bills.
- That you improve your **writing skills** as you write bills, committee reports, and Member Briefs.
- That you improve your **oral communication skills** as you participate in informal negotiations and formal debates.
- That you learn to **collaborate on projects** through working with committees, parties, and caucuses.
- That you learn to **articulate your own beliefs** in a persuasive manner while working with people with diverse viewpoints.
- That you learn **creative problem solving skills**.
- That you learn about the **general structure and processes** of the U.S. Congress.
- That you broaden your **knowledge of current national policy debates**.
- That you **understand the constraints and challenges** facing Members of Congress.

The first step is to register for LEGSIM. You should register by the end of week 2 using the following instructions.

- Please read and follow all of the instructions carefully during the registration process. There is a \$16 registration fee that can be paid by credit card or by PayPal.
- Go to [www.legsim.org](http://www.legsim.org), select the "Gustavus: Fall 2017" session, and click 'create new account'. Sign up as a new user and enter the chamber authorization code: a0d003dc4d857c59b74a29b6ffedcce1
- After you have registered, LegSim will send a confirmation e-mail (this may take up to 15 minutes). Follow the instructions on the e-mail to finalize your account.
- If you do not receive this e-mail, please check to see whether your e-mail system has filtered it out as spam. If you need additional assistance, send your name, e-mail address used in the transaction, and explanation to [support@legsim.org](mailto:support@legsim.org)
- Write down the user name and password you use!

Our simulation will model the U.S. Senate and each student will need to identify a state to represent. Only one student will be allowed to represent each state.

Our simulation allows for members to form and join political parties and/or caucuses.

There are many leadership positions you might hold in this simulation. The majority leader has the most powerful leadership role in the simulation, but must work with the minority leader to operate effectively. All leadership positions are elected positions, some by the whole chamber and others by the party caucus. Another leadership opportunity is serving as a chair of one of the standing committees. Depending on the majority leader's prerogative, these may be appointed or elected positions. Serving in a formal leadership position in Congress involves extra work. To simulate the benefits of leadership, senators elected to leadership positions are rewarded with "campaign contributions" (\$1 million = 1 extra credit point toward the final grade).

- Majority leader: \$2 million
- Minority leader: \$1 million
- Committee chair: \$1 million

In addition, the majority leader, minority leader, and committee chairs have campaign funds to distribute to other senators. A leader may give a check to him/herself:

- Majority leader: 2 checks of \$1 million
- Minority leader and committee chair: 1 check of \$1 million

This simulation features a pared down number of committees (rather than the 16 standing committees in the real Senate). In the Senate, each senator sits on approximately 11 committees or sub-committees. In our simulation, each senator is required to serve on a minimum of three committees. This will create some natural tensions, especially concerning scheduling and time management, which are meant to approximate the constraints faced by real members of Congress. Committees will discuss, debate, and modify bills within their jurisdiction. When committees decide to report bills to the full chamber, they will submit a committee report, providing a summary of the bill and information about the committee's decision. Committee chairs are responsible for submitting committee reports, but any member of a committee may author the report.

As the simulation progresses, you will author bills, resolutions, and constitutional amendments, debate these in committees and as a full Senate, and vote on legislation. You should be prepared to write several bills or resolutions during the semester. You may draw upon existing bills for most of your bill as long as you cite your sources, but some of your bills must be original.

As you might imagine, many of the policy issues you debate in the simulation will mirror those facing the actual U.S. Congress. Because of this, it will be to your advantage to be familiar with current political debates by reading a daily newspaper that focuses on national politics, such as the *New York Times* or *Washington Post*. Other useful sources for political news include *RealClearPolitics.com*, *Politico.com*, or *CQPolitics.com*.

Some tips for success in LEGSIM:

- Burning bridges is a bad idea...you never know when you might need help from an "enemy" and, as they say, politics makes strange bedfellows!
- Decorum is important both in the real Senate and in our simulation.
- Work horses often fare better in the end than show horses.
- Creativity is key! There are always ways around roadblocks and rules in the Senate...you just need to be creative enough to figure them out.
- The person who knows the rules best almost always wins (see the above point).
- The world (and Congress) is more about shades of gray than black and white (despite the rhetoric). As one congressional aide put it, "sometimes the best is the enemy of the good."
- Your reputation matters.

## MEMBER BRIEFS

You are a staffer for a newly elected senator. The senator is a real outsider and has limited knowledge of congressional history, how Congress operates, or policy issues. Your job is to prepare briefs for the senator on various topics or issues. (Hint: It can be helpful to think of yourself in your simulation role as a newly elected senator as the target audience for these briefs)

There are two types of Member Briefs: Congressional Briefs and Issue Briefs. Congressional Briefs summarize key points regarding congressional history and operation. Issue Briefs summarize key points regarding public policy issues. **You must submit 10 Member Briefs in total including a minimum of 6 Congressional Briefs and 2 Issue Briefs.** Each brief must be clear and succinct, written in a formal tone. The senator is very busy, so your entire brief for each topic may not be more than 2 single-spaced pages (or four double spaced pages) in length.

### *Congressional Briefs (Minimum of 6):*

Congressional Briefs give you an opportunity to reflect on and synthesize the material presented in a single chapter of the text. The assignment forces you not just to read the material but to make choices about which information and ideas are the most significant. Your job is to identify the handful of main ideas (1-3) from a single chapter that would be most important to a newly-elected senator and then explain those ideas clearly and succinctly. I expect these to be more than simply an enhanced outline of the chapter. You should develop an argument and logical organizational structure for your Congressional Briefs.

### *Issue Briefs (Minimum of 2):*

Issue Briefs provide you with the necessary background information to write bills for the simulation. An Issue Brief should: 1) Explain the public policy issue/problem, 2) Provide an overview of the history of the issue including what action federal or state governments have taken to address the issue (if any), 3) Summarize the key arguments and actors involved in the issue/problem, and 4) Provide a recommendation for action. You are welcome to select any issues as long as there is or is potential for the federal government to play a role in addressing the issue.

### **Member Brief Guidelines:**

- Typed
- 2 single spaced or 4 double spaced pages (normal font, size, and margins)
- Includes page numbers and a works cited page (for Issue Briefs only)
- Fully proofread for spelling, grammar, and style errors
- Stapled

You must submit at least five Member Briefs on or before October 20. You may submit more than one Member Brief each week. December 8 is the last date to submit a Member Brief.

## MEMBER BRIEF RUBRICS

### Congressional Briefs

	<b>Poor (0-5)</b>	<b>Average/Good (6-8)</b>	<b>Excellent (9-10)</b>
<b>Selection of key ideas</b>	No clear key ideas identified	Identifies 1-3 key ideas but some or all may not be particularly important to a new senator	Clearly identifies 1-3 key ideas that are theoretically or practically important from the perspective of a new senator
<b>Explanation of main points</b>	Explanation and description of key ideas is inaccurate	Key ideas are accurately described, but with too much or too little detail	Clearly and succinctly summarizes and explains the key ideas selected; provides appropriate detail for a new senator without unnecessary information
<b>Writing mechanics</b>	Language sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage; does not adhere to length requirements	Language generally conveys meaning to the intended audience with clarity, although writing may include some errors; moderate violation of length requirements	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to the intended audience with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free; adheres strictly to length requirements
<b>Overall impression</b>	Little evidence of depth, sophistication, originality, or creativity		Depth, sophistication, originality, and creativity of the essay demonstrates mastery of the material

### Issue Briefs

	<b>Poor (0-5)</b>	<b>Average/Good (6-8)</b>	<b>Excellent (9-10)</b>
<b>Explanation of Policy/Problem</b>	Does not clearly explain the policy/problem; Inappropriate policy/problem	Explanation of an appropriate policy/problem but lacks depth or clarity	Clear and thorough explanation of an appropriate(federal) policy/problem
<b>History of Policy/Problem</b>	Serious errors in describing the policy or problem	Overview of the history of the policy or problem lacks important detail	Clear and thorough overview of the history of the policy or problem
<b>Research</b>	Absence of high quality sources	Quality of sources is mixed or few sources are used	Accurate and thorough research using multiple high quality sources
<b>Key Actors and Arguments</b>	No description of arguments made by supporters and/or opponents of the policy	Description of arguments made by supporters and opponents lacks depth or clarity	Clear and thorough description of arguments made by supporters and opponents
<b>Policy Recommendation</b>	No recommendation	Proposed course of action lacks detail or clarity	Clear and thorough proposed course of action
<b>Writing mechanics</b>	Language sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage; does not adhere to length requirements	Language generally conveys meaning to the intended audience with clarity, although writing may include some errors; moderate violation of length requirements	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to the intended audience with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free; adheres strictly to length requirements
<b>Overall impression</b>	Little evidence of depth, sophistication, originality, or creativity		Depth, sophistication, originality, and creativity of the essay demonstrates mastery of the material

## FINAL REPORT ASSIGNMENT

Analyze one accomplishment of your legislative career, considering your motives and strategy as well as the outcomes and implications of your actions. Your analysis should compare and contrast your experience with the real Congress.

### Getting Started:

- **Pick an accomplishment:** To be most successful, pick a legislative accomplishment that allows you to incorporate reflections on congressional structure and rules as well as electoral considerations.
- **Review the “For reflection” prompts in the syllabus and your Member Briefs:** Consider congressional structure, rules and procedure, electoral connections, and involvement with other branches of government in your analysis.
- **Review the reading materials:** This assignment asks you to make connections between the readings and your simulation experience. I expect you to draw heavily from course readings and concepts in your report. Any readings you reference should be properly cited.

### Reelection Report Guidelines

- Typed
- 6-8 double spaced pages in length (normal font, size, and margins)
- Includes page numbers
- Fully proofread for spelling, grammar, and style errors
- Stapled

	<b>Poor (0-5)</b>	<b>Average/Good (6-8)</b>	<b>Excellent (9-10)</b>
<b>Identification of legislative accomplishment</b>	Does not clearly identify an appropriate legislative accomplishment	Explanation lacks depth or clarity	Clear and thorough explanation of an appropriate legislative accomplishment
<b>Use of examples from simulation</b>	Does not provide examples from the simulation	Provides examples from the simulation, but may lack detail and/or appropriateness	Provides detailed and appropriate references to examples from the simulation
<b>Connection to Congressional structure/rules</b>	References few course concepts and/or theories	References and accurately integrates multiple course concepts and/or theories with proper source attribution	References and accurately integrates all relevant course concepts and/or theories with proper source attribution
<b>Connection to electoral considerations</b>	References few course concepts and/or theories	References and accurately integrates multiple course concepts and/or theories with proper source attribution	References and accurately integrates all relevant course concepts and/or theories with proper source attribution
<b>Connection to intergovernmental relationships</b>	References few course concepts and/or theories	References and accurately integrates multiple course concepts and/or theories with proper source attribution	References and accurately integrates all relevant course concepts and/or theories with proper source attribution
<b>Writing mechanics</b>	Language sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage; does not adhere to length requirements	Language generally conveys meaning with clarity, although writing may include some errors; moderate violation of length requirements	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free; adheres strictly to length requirements
<b>Overall impression</b>	Little evidence of depth, sophistication, originality, or creativity		Depth, sophistication, originality, and creativity of the essay demonstrates mastery of the material

## GRADING

*You can earn an A or A-* if you do an excellent job of developing original ideas, organizing arguments logically, finding credible supporting evidence, and communicating the information without stylistic or mechanical errors. These papers present a significant and thoughtful position that is both convincing and thought-provoking. These are the kind of papers that leave a memorable and lasting impression on the reader. I reserve this grade for papers that are truly excellent, and A grades, in particular, are rare.

*You can earn a B+, B, or B-* if you do a good job developing your paper, organizing arguments in a logical way, finding credible supporting evidence, and communicating the information without distracting stylistic or mechanical errors. These are papers to be proud of because they are very strong and reflect a clear understanding of both the assignment and the course material, however, they lack the sophistication and polish of A papers.

*You can earn a C+, C, or C-* if you do an average job of developing your paper, organizing arguments in a logical way, finding credible supporting evidence, and communicating the information without distracting stylistic or mechanical errors. These papers reflect the average expectations I have for good college-level work. They clearly answer the question, but arguments may need to be more clearly developed, or supporting evidence may be inappropriate and/or lacking. These papers often contain distracting stylistic or mechanical errors or they may be poorly organized in a way that impedes your ability to construct a persuasive argument. This grade often reflects a lack of time or effort in researching, writing, revising, editing, or proofreading.

*You can earn a D+ or D* if you do a poor job of developing your paper, organizing arguments in a logical way (you may not have supporting arguments or any sort of organizational structure), finding credible supporting evidence (you may not have the right kind or amount of evidence or you may not be citing that evidence properly), and communicating the information without distracting stylistic or mechanical errors. These papers reflect poor-quality college-level work with little time or effort put into the writing process.

*You can earn an F* if you do not turn in a paper, plagiarize your paper in any way, do not answer the question, and/or do such a poor job in writing your paper that it is impossible to understand what message you want to communicate with the paper.

### Course Grade Scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	65-69
D	60-64
F	<59