

STUDY GUIDE FOR MIDTERM EXAM, MAY 5, 2009 POLITICAL SCIENCE 517: LEGISLATIVE POLITICS

[Note: Save this study guide for use with the final exam.]

This document is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to all material covered in the course up to the mid-term. It is intended to note some major themes in the course and some specific items to consider.

I. MAJOR THEMES IN INTERPRETING CONGRESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

The two principal roles of Congress and its members. General functions performed by Congress.

Major developments in the evolution of the modern Congress.

Incumbency success in re-election: extent, reasons, and impact.

Differences and similarities in House and Senate elections.

Turnover, partisan districts, Republican success in the South, other regional patterns in elections.

Hill styles and home styles in the behavior of members.

The nature of party leadership: importance, roles, and relationships.

The place of substantive committees and subcommittees in Congress.

A comparison of the impact of rules and norms on legislative outcomes in the House and Senate.

Partisanship in Congress: fluctuations, causes, impact, advantages, disadvantages of different levels.

II. TERMS AND CONCEPTS [Some others are already embedded in section I.]

Burke's theory of representation [representative vs. delegate].

The "Two Congresses" thesis of Davidson, Oleszek, and Lee.

The core goals of members of Congress [Fenno].

Membership turnover.

Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 [McCain-Feingold]

Voter turnout in congressional elections

Congressional elections: local or national events?

Reapportionment

Redistricting for the House of Representatives

House norms

Senate norms

The "collective action" dilemma

Conditional party government theory of congressional leadership

Pivotal voter theory of congressional leadership

Cooper-Brady thesis on the influence of party government

Party committees in the House

Party committees in the Senate

Conference committees

Subject matter caucuses
Congressional staff
Congressional Budget Office
Government Accountability Office
Congressional Research Service
State delegations
Suspension of the rules [House]
House Rules Committee
House Ways and Means Committee
Senate Finance Committee
House and Senate Judiciary Committees
Senate Foreign Relations Committee
House and Senate Armed Services Committees
Filibusters and cloture [Senate]
Holds [Senate]
Unanimous consent agreements [Senate]
Cue-giving and cue-taking

III. INDIVIDUALS

Joe Cannon
Mitch McConnell
Newt Gingrich
Dennis Hastert
Nancy Pelosi
Steny Hoyer
Sam Rayburn
Thomas Reed [and the Reed rules]
Harry Reid
John Boehner
"Tip" O'Neill
Tom Delay
Eric Cantor
Lyndon Johnson in the Senate
Robert Byrd