


# Political Science 312: Legislative Process

## International & Political Affairs

Professor: Dr. Nicole R Foster Shoaf   
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Office: Webster 226A

Monday *by appointment* 900-200  
Tuesday 1230 - 100  
Wednesday 1000 – 200  
Thursday 1230 – 100  
By Appointment – [Click here](#) to schedule

## 1 COURSE DESCRIPTION (SPRING 2020)

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This course focuses on elected legislative bodies. In doing so, it emphasizes representation, organization, participation (both by the public and their elected officials) and proposals for improved organization of elected legislative bodies. Emphasis is placed on the Missouri General Assembly and the United States Congress.

## 2 COURSE OBJECTIVES

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At the conclusion of the course, the student should be able to: (1) identify the constitutional roots of legislative powers and institutions; (2) identify the historical development, growth and change in legislative powers and organization; (3) identify characteristics of members of the House and Senate in the Missouri General Assembly and the US Congress; (4) describe what motivates people to seek election to the legislature and to pursue careers in the legislative branch; (5) describe the relationship the legislature has with other branches of government, and (6) assess the performance of the legislature as a democratic institution and a legislative body and of its members as representatives and lawmakers.

## 3 COURSE MATERIALS

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Two books are required for this course and you need to follow state/national news throughout the semester. Important events may be discussed and included on assignments or exams. You should gather your news from a variety of sources, but I would recommend starting with a state newspaper, [www.ncsl.org](http://www.ncsl.org), [www.stateline.org](http://www.stateline.org) and The Washington Post (discounted subscriptions are often available through Amazon).

- Haskell, John, Marian Currinder, and Sarah A. Grove. (2014). Congress in Context, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. ISBN: [9780813347561](#)
- Sherman, Jake and Anna Palmer. (2019). The Hill to Die On: The Battle for Congress and the Future of Trump's America. ISBN [9780525574743](#)
- Sign up for 2 Stateline newsletters – the [State Policy Update](#), and the [Stateline Weekly](#). [Click here](#).
- Sign up for [The Hill's Morning Report & Tip Sheet](#) newsletter.

### 3.1.1 Political News

[5-Minute Fix newsletter](#). This summarizes the biggest political stories in something you can read in 5 minutes or less, every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday. Other good options include: [Monkey Cage newsletter](#). The Monkey Cage is a site that connects the expertise of political scientists with members of the public. “At TMC, political scientists draw on their expertise and the discipline’s research to provide in-depth analysis, illuminate the news, and inform civic discussion.” Sent 3 times a week. [The Hill's Morning Report & Tip Sheet](#) newsletter through the Hill.com. This site is a top non-partisan political news site that focuses on the White House, Congress, and the federal government. Sent daily. [FiveThirtyEight.com Politics Newsletter](#). When you use this link, there are several newsletter options that are available – we will only need the *Politics* newsletter for this course – but their sports newsletter is popular among fans.

### 3.1.2 General News

You will also need to be familiar with major headlines in the news– which you can pick up from your favorite source, including but not limited to: [CNN](#), [Fox News](#), [MSNBC](#), [ABC News](#), [CBS News](#), [The Wall Street Journal](#), [The New York Times](#), [The Washington Post](#), etc. For those of you who are just developing the habit of paying attention to current events you might consider starting with satire which uses humor, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues. In other words, it is a funny way of learning about current events. You can try [The Late Show with Stephen Colbert](#), [The Daily Show](#), [Late Night with Seth Meyers](#), or [Full Frontal with Samantha Bee](#). For a humorous take on politics and policy issues in more depth, check out [John Oliver's Last Week Tonight](#) show. Note that some political satire utilizes adult language. The shows on broadcast television tend to edit for language, but there is less censorship on cable and minimal (if any) censorship on HBO.

## 4 COURSE POLICIES

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### 4.1 ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is expected. Every student is extended 4 personal days (free absences), which accounts for 2 weeks of class. You are not expected to contact the instructor when you miss class - the first 4 absences will be excused regardless of why you are not in class. You are expected to arrive on time to class. Please do not arrive late or leave early, except under exceptional circumstances. Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive and disrespectful to your classmates and instructor. Arriving late or departing early will count as ½ absence. If you miss a class, I recommend asking a classmate for notes. I do not provide lecture notes or slides, but I am available during office hours to review any material that you would like to discuss in more depth.

### 4.2 CLASS CANCELLATION / INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

If it is necessary to cancel class due to an emergency or inclement weather, information will be posted on Blackboard.

### 4.3 TIME ON TASK

We will spend 150 minutes in class each week, and you should expect to spend approximately 6 hours per week outside of the classroom working on this course, although this will vary by student and by week.

### 4.4 LATE WORK POLICY

- If you are having difficulty keeping up with the workload in this course, you should schedule an appointment to meet with the instructor. – [Click here](#) to schedule a meeting.
- Exams will be accepted up to 1 week late with an immediate and automatic 20% penalty.
- Under no circumstances will late work be accepted after April 30. Plan accordingly.
- In the absence of an extension, late work is subject to an immediate 10% penalty, which will increase to a 20% penalty after 1 week.
- Pop quizzes given in class cannot be submitted late. If you are not present to take the quiz, you sacrifice the opportunity to earn the points.
- All work must be submitted to Blackboard in order to be eligible for points.

## 4.5 COURSE COMMUNICATION

Important information will be circulated via the Blackboard system and the MSSU email system. Check your MSSU email account and Blackboard sites regularly. I recommend having your MSSU email sent to your phone and/or forwarded to an account you check frequently. The best way to contact me is via email.

## 4.6 CLASS RULES AND NORMS

*It Is Your Grade.* If you are ever confused or unsure about the material or expectations, ask immediately (before assignments are due). The longer you wait, the less opportunity there is to get on track. Grades are determined on the quality of work submitted and the degree to which your performance meets the course requirements. While I empathize with the demands of the world outside of my classroom, only your performance affects your grade.

*Active engagement is expected.* Active participation and engagement are expected. To this end, we will engage in a variety of interactive discussions and assignments this semester. These will require you to demonstrate understanding of the material and integrate course material with the world around you.

*Respect is required at all times.* You will interact with the professor and classmates and at times, the subject matter may be controversial and the discussions provocative. We will maintain a respectful environment at all times. You are encouraged to express your opinions and engage your classmates; however, all interactions must be done in a respectful manner. This course is an academic exercise, and disrespect and hostility will not be tolerated.

*Digital Rules.* Put your phone on silent before class begins and do not use it in class. Texting, checking email, playing games, and other online activities are a distraction in the classroom and will not be tolerated. Put your phones away or you will lose course participation points, and you may be asked to leave.

## 5 COURSE EVALUATION

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### 5.1 GRADING SCALE

Your final grade is based on your performance on the assigned work and your level of mastery of the course content.

90 – 100 points A: Outstanding performance and complete mastery of the course material.

80 – 89 points B: Good performance and general understanding of the course material, but not complete mastery.

70 – 79 points C: Average performance with moderate understanding of course material.

60 – 69 points D: Below average performance and some understanding of course material.

59 points or less F: Poor performance and insufficient knowledge of the material.

### 5.2 ASSIGNMENTS

#### 5.2.1 Exams **30 points**

Formats of the exams will vary, but may include essays, multiple choice questions, short answer questions and/or matching questions.

#### 5.2.2 Research Paper or Literature Review **35 Points**

You will write and revise a paper on a subject to be determined in consultation with the professor. You may choose to write a quantitative research paper or a literature review.

- **Paper Proposal** – Submit a ½ page, single spaced discussion of the topic you are interested in writing about this semester. For research papers, include details about your data source and proposed hypotheses. For literature reviews, include a thorough discussion of your specific research question.
- **Annotated Bibliography** – Submit an annotated bibliography with 2 books from an academic press and 10 peer-reviewed journal articles.

- **Paper** – Papers should be single spaced, 10-12 point Arial or Calibri font, with 1” margins. Do not include a title page, course, or author information. Do include an interesting title and an abstract of 150-200 words. Submit a complete bibliography in Chicago format in a separate document.
- **Presentation** – Give a 5-minute presentation, with a PowerPoint or academic poster

### **5.2.3 Participation 15 Points**

Always come to class prepared, having read the assigned materials and be prepared to actively participate in conversations about the readings and discussion questions. Your participation and leadership in class discussions will be graded. Pop quizzes will be utilized to encourage all participants to come to class prepared.

### **5.2.4 Civic Engagement 20 Points**

**Option 1: Single Trip to Jefferson City.** Visit the MO General Assembly while it is in session. While in Jefferson City:

- Attend a committee meeting and take notes about what is discussed.
- Have meetings with 2 state legislators, preferably 1 Democrat and 1 Republican, discussing an issue of interest to you. You will need to schedule the meetings well in advance of your trip to Jefferson City.
- Watch the state house or senate in session, including debate and voting, and take notes on what you observe and what is discussed.
- After your trip, draft a 5-page report discussing what you observed, incorporating background information from the assigned readings and your own research.

**Option 2: Attend City Council Meetings.**

- Prepare a 1-page report outlining the governing structure of the city you selected, with a special emphasis on legislative power. This report should also discuss the key political issues facing the city, which can be identified via the city’s social media accounts, newspaper articles, and local news broadcasts.
- Attend 3 separate city council meetings for a locality of your choice. After each meeting, draft a 1+ page reflection paper discussing what you heard at the meeting and what struck you as most interesting, tying in the assigned readings.
- After your final city council meeting, draft a 2-page summary report, discussing what you have observed and learned about the city legislative process, incorporating background information from the assigned readings.

**Option 3: Twitter Campaign**

- You have the option to conduct a Twitter campaign throughout the semester, beginning with your first tweet no later than January 20. The purpose of the Twitter campaign is to participate in sustained and substantive public discourse and learn how to use Twitter effectively, a strange but useful skill in an array of industries.
- Assignment Details:
  - You must share the Twitter handle you are using for the assignment with the class so that the class can interact with you.
  - Your Twitter handle must follow @MSSU\_IPA on Twitter (following @FosterShoaf is recommended, but not required),
  - Each Tweet for this project must include the #MSSU\_IPA and #LegProcess hashtags. This will allow me to track your course-related Tweets. You may add other hashtags, at your discretion.
  - In order to earn points for your Tweets, the content of the posts must be relevant to the course.
  - You must tweet a minimum of **3 days** a week – tweets must be substantive, like sharing and commenting on a news article that is relevant to the course.
  - At least once a week you must tag an elected official in your Tweets.

- You are required to engage with the Twitter community with integrity and respect. Spreading false information, engaging in abusive or harassing behavior, or behaving in a way that reflects poorly on the university of IPA program will result in swift and severe penalties for this assignment. You are allowed to engage in lively political debate and draw attention to the issues you believe to be important, but you need to do so in a way that is honorable, not deplorable.

## 6 UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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### 6.1 DATES & DEADLINES

- January 24 Last day to drop & receive a full tuition refund
- February 5 Last day to withdraw with partial tuition refund
- March 16-20 Spring Break
- April 3 Last day to withdraw from a class with a “W”
- April 27 Last day to withdraw from all courses with “W”

### 6.2 BASIC NEEDS STATEMENT

Students experiencing personal or academic distress, food insecurity, and/or difficulty navigating campus resources are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Affairs (417.625.9392 / [studentaffairs@mssu.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@mssu.edu)) for support. If you are uncomfortable making this contact, please notify your instructor so they can assist you in locating the needed resources.

Students who are experiencing challenges securing food for themselves and their families, and who believe this may affect their performance in this course, are encouraged to visit the Lion Co-op, which is located in the MSSU Residential Life Emergency Shelter and is open three times a week. Students are also encouraged to contact the Student Life and Conduct Office (BSC 347, 417-625-9531), ACTS (HEARNES 314, 417-625-9324), and/or your instructor for assistance in securing additional resources. Follow the [Lion Co-Op on Facebook](#).

### 6.3 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA) STATEMENT

If you are an individual with a disability and require an accommodation for this class, please notify the instructor or Coordinator of Student Disability Services, at the Student Success Center (417) 659-3725.

### 6.4 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Missouri Southern State University is committed to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Academic work is evaluated on the assumption that the work presented is the student's own, unless designated otherwise. Submitting work that is not one's own is unacceptable and is considered a serious violation of University policy. Cheating is a serious offense that invalidates the purpose of a university education. Any student who takes credit for the work of another person, offers or accepts assistance beyond that allowed by an instructor, or uses unauthorized sources for a test or assignment is cheating. Students must be conscious of their responsibilities as scholars, to learn to discern what is included in plagiarism as well as in other breaches of the Student Handbook and must know and practice the specifications for citations in scholarly work. When dealing with cases of academic dishonesty, the course instructor may choose to use the campus judicial system; this includes filing an incident report with the Dean of Students, who may act on the report by issuing a written warning or by recommending disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion. Penalties for academic dishonesty may include a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate.

## **6.5 NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Missouri Southern State University emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all persons and adheres to a strict non-discrimination policy regarding the treatment of individual faculty, staff, students, third parties on campus, and applicants for employment and admissions. In accord with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected class, in employment or in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the University, including, but not limited to, athletics, instruction, grading, the awarding of student financial aid, recruitment, admissions, and housing. Questions, concerns, and reports about Title IX, including sexual misconduct or pregnancy educational planning, should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator in the Student Affairs Office at (417) 625-9532.

I will seek to keep information private to the greatest extent possible. However, as an instructor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility. I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred related to Title IX. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting a counselor in the Advising, Counseling, and Testing Services Office (ACTS) at (417) 625-9324. Crime reports to law enforcement can be made at (417) 623-3131.

## **6.6 ACADEMIC IMPACT FOR UNIVERSITY-SPONSORED ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC ABSENCES**

Students participating in University sponsored academic and athletic events are considered representatives of the University and scheduled activities/competitions resulting in a missed class may be considered excused absences. Missed classes qualify as excused absences if the student informs the instructor(s) in advance, is responsible for all information, tests, materials and assignments, and completes assigned work prior to the departure, unless the instructor has agreed to other arrangements.

Faculty are encouraged to work with students, whenever possible, to facilitate their participation in University sponsored academic and athletic events; however, in some cases, it is not possible to replicate missed course content. In these cases, students may need to attend class. Whenever possible, students participating in University sponsored academic and athletic events should work with their advisor to create a schedule that will avoid missed class time.

Students should not be penalized if absent from a test, lecture, lab or other activity because of an excused absence. Policies should be fair and equitable in application. For example, excused absences should not be penalized with point reductions or require students utilize the dropped grade option for a University sponsored activity or athletic event. Inclement weather and other factors may preclude a student's ability to provide notification in advance and/or to complete assigned work prior to departure or return to campus. It may be necessary to provide make-up opportunities in these cases.

No class time shall be missed for practices or home events except for time required to prepare or warm-up before the activity/competition. Logistics necessary for home activities or competitions will vary by activity/sport so students and instructors should collaborate to handle this missed class time as part of the absence if possible. For away competitions students shall not miss class prior to 30 minutes before the scheduled time of departure.

Students who will miss class due to participation will identify themselves to their instructors at the beginning of each semester using the approved documentation and provide a schedule with departure times to identify class meetings in conflict with event dates. In addition, the student is responsible for reminding the instructor by e-mail and/or in person of each upcoming absence. The student who fails to properly communicate with her/his instructor in this regard may be penalized for an absence per the course syllabi. The amount of lead time for upcoming absences should be discussed by the instructor and student as this may vary with the situation. Sponsors and coaches are asked to confirm an accurate roster of students traveling for each event. Students who are unable to participate or have not been cleared to play should attend class.

## 7 COURSE SCHEDULE

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Note: This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Schedule updates will be posted on Blackboard. A number of items on the schedule are marked at *Recommended* – these are not required and will not be on the exam. However, they provide information that you may find useful as we study the legislative process. Days marked as “Flex” are days built into the schedule to accommodate new topics that might arise or days that may be used to catch up, if we fall behind.

### **Part 1: Introduction to the Legislative Process**

#### **Tuesday, January 14**

- Introduction to the course
- The Best Jobs of My Life: Legislative Staff Reflect (Podcast; link on BB)

#### **Thursday, January 16**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 1. Congress as the Board of Directors (also available on BB as a PDF)
- Elected Officials Assignment Due
- *Recommended* - The Bicameral Congress: Crash Course Government and Politics #2 (BB Video)
- Sign up for 2 Stateline newsletters – the [State Policy Update](#), and the [Stateline Weekly](#). [Click here](#).
- Sign up for [The Hill’s Morning Report & Tip Sheet](#) newsletter.
  - We will discuss the stories in these newsletters regularly and they are fair game for the pop quizzes.

#### **Tuesday, January 21**

- Squire & Moncrief C1: Ninety-Nine Chambers and Why They Matter, pages 1-23, in Squire, Peverill and Gary Moncrief. (2015). *State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes*, ISBN 9781442247499 (PDF on BB)
- Squire & Hamm C1: The Lineage of American Legislatures, pages 5-21, in Squire, Peverill and Keith E. Hamm. (2005). *101 Chambers: Congress, State Legislatures, & the Future of Legislative Studies*, ISBN 0814209386 (PDF on BB)

#### **Thursday, January 23**

- Introduction to the MO General Assembly
- State Legislatures at a Glance (Link on BB)

#### **Tuesday, January 28**

- Squire & Hamm Membership, pages 26-28, in Squire, Peverill and Keith E. Hamm. (2005). *101 Chambers: Congress, State Legislatures, & the Future of Legislative Studies*, ISBN 0814209386 (PDF on BB)
- Squire & Hamm C5: Legislators and Legislative Careers, pages 128-145, in Squire, Peverill and Keith E. Hamm. (2005). *101 Chambers: Congress, State Legislatures, & the Future of Legislative Studies*, ISBN 0814209386 (PDF on BB)
- State Partisan Composition (Link on BB)
- Women in State Legislatures (Link on BB)

#### **Thursday, January 30**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 2. The Two Congresses: Lawmaking and Representation

### **Tuesday, February 4**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 3. The House and Senate, Party Leadership and Committees
- Squire & Moncrief C3 Ethics, pages 86-88, In Squire, Peverill and Gary Moncrief. (2015). State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes, ISBN 9781442247499 (PDF on BB)
- *Recommended* - Congressional Committees: Crash Course Government & Politics #7 (BB Video)
- *Recommended* - Congressional Leadership: Crash Course Government and Politics #8 (BB Video)

### **Thursday, February 6 – TLC**

- Flex
- Federalism: The "Hamilton" State Legislative Mix Tape (Podcast; link on BB)
- *Recommended* - Opioid Crisis Generates Bipartisan Solutions (Podcast; link on BB)
- **Paper Proposal Due**

### **Tuesday, February 11**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 4. Congressional Elections
- Squire & Moncrief C2: State Legislative Campaigns and Elections, pages 31-54, in Squire, Peverill and Gary Moncrief. (2015). State Legislatures Today: Politics Under the Domes, ISBN 9781442247499 (PDF on BB)
- Congressional Fundraising: Last Week Tonight (BB Video)

### **Thursday, February 13**

- The Security of American Elections (Podcast; link on BB)
- *Recommended* - Congressional Elections: Crash Course Government and Politics #6 (BB Video)
- *Recommended* - Gerrymandering: Last Week Tonight (BB Video)
- **Exam 1**

## **Part 2: A Hill to Die On**

### **Tuesday, February 18**

- Flex
- Doris Kearns Goodwin on Leadership and History (Podcast; link on BB)

### **Thursday, February 20**

- Sherman, Jake and Anna Palmer. (2019). The Hill to Die On, Notes on Sources through page 184

### **Tuesday, February 25**

- Sherman, Jake and Anna Palmer. (2019). The Hill to Die On, Purity page 185 - end

### **Thursday, February 27**

- Flex

### **Tuesday, March 3**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 5. Understanding the Legislative Process
- 2020 Census: What's at Stake for States (Podcast; link on BB)
- *Recommended* - State Legislatures and ALEC: Last Week Tonight (BB Video)

### **Thursday, March 5**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 6. Authorizing the Work of Government



- *Recommended* - Congressional Decisions: Crash Course Government and Politics #10 (BB Video)

**Tuesday, March 10**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 7. The Power of the Purse
- The Role of States and Governments in Natural Disasters (Podcast; link on BB)
- *Recommended* - Federal Budget: Last Week Tonight (BB Video)
- Extra Credit: Attend [Colleen Nelson](#) talk at 1100 am in Corely Auditorium
  - Nelson is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who currently heads the KC Star editorial team.

**Thursday, March 12**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 8. Federal Budget Issues in the 21st Century
- Cybersecurity: It's More Than Elections (Podcast; link on BB)
- **Annotated Bibliography Due**

**March 16 – 22 Spring Break**

**Tuesday, March 24**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 9. The Oversight Power
- Tackling Sexual Harassment in the Legislature (Podcast; link on BB)

**Thursday, March 26**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 10. Methods of Congressional Oversight

**Tuesday, March 31**

- Flex
- Understanding Women in State Legislatures (Podcast; link on BB)

**Thursday, April 2**

- Flex

**Tuesday, April 7**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 11. Congress and the President: The Struggle over Directing Public Policy
- For Victims, Policies on Rape Kits Hard to Understand (Podcast; link on BB)

**Thursday, April 9**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 12. Congress and the Courts

**Tuesday, April 14**

- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 13. Interest Groups and Congressional Policy Making
- Haskell, Currinder & Grove 14. Congress in the 21st century

**Thursday, April 16 - MPSA**

- **Exam 2**
- **Research Papers Due**

### **Part 3: The Legislative Process in Context**

**Tuesday, April 21**

- Flex

**Thursday, April 23**

- Flex
- **Civic Engagement Assignment Due**

**Tuesday, April 28**

- Research Presentations

**Thursday, April 30**

- Research Presentations

**Tuesday, May 5**

- Research Presentations

**Thursday, May 7**

- Research Presentations

**Tuesday, May 12**

- Final Exam Session - **Presentations Due @ 1230**