This seminar was designed for several Ph.D. students who were taking Politics 541, The American Political System, concurrently. The readings for Politics 541 included four books related to Congress that might otherwise be included in the syllabus for Politics 736.


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1. Organizational Meeting (February 8)

We will use this session to get organized for the semester. Please bring any suggestions of things you would like to cover.

2. Representation (February 15)

This is Fenno week. Read the first book with care. Read what you can of the longer book on the Senate. Both books are full of stories, so the reading goes quickly.


Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *Senators on the Campaign Trail: The Politics of Representation* (1996). Read the introduction (pp. 3-17), chapters 2, 4, and 7 (pp. 42-73, 107-159, 238-278), and the conclusion (pp. 331-338). This amounts to 149 pages.
3. Early Rational Choice Theory (February 22)

The theme this week is the early work on rational choice. Read Mayhew with care. And then read selected portions of Fenno's book on committees.


Richard F. Fenno, Jr., *Congressmen in Committees* (1973). Read the introduction (xiii-xvii), chapters 1, 2, and 3 (1-80), and the epilogue (280-291). Skim the rest quickly if you have a chance.

4. Legislative Organization I: Committees (March 1)


5. Congressional Elections (March 8)

Assignment for Politics 541:


Assignments for Politics 736:


6. **Legislative Organization II: Political Parties (March 15)**


7. **Roll-Call Voting (March 29)**

Assignment for Politics 541:


Assignments for Politics 736:


8. Representation of Minorities in Congress (April 5)


9. Interest Groups in Congress (April 12)

Richard A. Smith, “Interest Group Influence in the U.S. Congress,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (February 1995), pp. 89-139. This is a review essay, so you may want to read it first.


10. **Congress and the Bureaucracy (April 19)**


11. **Congressional History (April 26)**


12. **Individual Autonomy in Congress (May 3)**