



The American Congress

By Steven S. Smith, Jason M. Roberts, Ryan J. Vander Wielen

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The American Congress provides the most insightful, up-to-date treatment of congressional politics available in an undergraduate text. Informed by the authors' Capitol Hill experience and nationally recognized scholarship, this book presents a crisp introduction to all major features of Congress: its party and committee systems, leadership, and voting and floor activity. The American Congress has the most in-depth discussion of the place of the president, the courts, and interest groups in congressional policy making available in a text. The authors blend an emphasis on recent developments in congressional politics with a clear discussion of the rules of the game, the history of key features of Congress, and stories from recent Congresses that bring politics to life. No other text weaves into the discussion the important ideas of recent political science research. The book includes the most comprehensive list of suggested readings and Internet resources on Congress to date.

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"Smith, Roberts, and Vander Wielen present ideas, not just anecdotes, stories, or mind-numbing facts. They present the debates, in the literature and within our society, about how we should think about Congress and its activities. The outcome of these debates, the ideas that win, shape everything from voting to lawmaking to judicial interpretation of statutes. Nowhere are these ideas so comprehensively laid out as in this textbook. This is why I use it, and it is the principal advantage that this text has over the competition."

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About the Author

Steven S. Smith is Kate M. Gregg Professor of Social Sciences and Director of the Weidenbaum Center at Washington University in St. Louis. He has authored or co-authored seven books and many articles on congressional politics, including *Call to Order: Floor Politics in the House and Senate*, *Party Influence in Congress*, and *Politics or Principle: Filibustering in the U.S. Senate*, and has coauthored several articles and a book on Russian parliamentary politics. He is a former Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and has taught at the University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, and George Washington University.

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Ryan J. Vander Wielen is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Temple University. He was previously a Fellow in the Political Institutions and Public Choice Program at Michigan State University and at the Weidenbaum Center at Washington University in St. Louis. He has recently been published in *Political Analysis* and *Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review*.

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