

# **PSC 615: Legislative Process**

---

Fall 2026

Lecture: T 3:30pm-6:20pm

Course website: <https://www.michaelperess.com/teaching/lp2026.html>

**Prof. Michael Peress**

[michael.peress@stonybrook.edu](mailto:michael.peress@stonybrook.edu)

SBS N743

Overview: Through reading and discussion of the recent literature, we will study the legislative branch of the United States government. We will discuss the electoral process, the nature of representation, legislative organization, the committee system, floor procedure, congressional parties, and inter-branch relations. We will examine theories of lawmaking and the impact of institutional and electoral rules on legislative behavior and outcomes.

Course Requirements: There will be two major requirements for this course. First, attendance and class participation are mandatory. Each week, some students will be designated as discussion leaders for certain articles. Participation counts for 50% of your final grade.

Your will be required to write one research paper (10-15 pages in length). I am quite open to a number of different approaches you could take here, but you must gain permission for your topic before you begin. The main requirement is that you go beyond the class readings and perform some original research. I will provide a number of ideas as the course proceeds. The research paper will count for 50% of your final grade.

Readings: The list of readings is available at the course website and will be updated slightly during the semester. In addition, I recommend purchasing an older edition of Walter Oleszek's "Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process" as a reference.