PSCI 320: Legislative Process  
Term Paper Guidelines

➢ **Topic 1:** Choose a bill that has been considered by the U.S. Congress sometime in the past 30 years. (See the CSUSB Library’s database “Legislative History via WestlawNext” for ideas.)

- Write an analysis of the lawmaking process in relation to your chosen bill.
- Your analysis you should conform to the following structure:
  a. **A clear introduction (which includes your overall thesis)**
  b. **A description of the bill’s origins and the objectives of the bill:**
     1) Who introduced the bill and where did the idea for the bill originate?
     2) What was the bill designed to do? What were its objectives?
     3) How was it designed to achieve these objectives?
  c. **An analysis of the legislative history of the bill.**

      The following are some questions you might consider in your analysis:
      1) Was the bill supported on partisan terms?
      2) What ideological coalitions were most opposed to/in favor of the bill?
      3) What were some of the major arguments made by supporters and opponents?
      4) What interest groups influenced the substance and success of the bill?
      5) What interests were represented in the committee hearings? What was the focus of the hearings? Were all sides of the issue presented?
      6) How might the bill promote the career interests of its sponsors?
      7) What were some of the obstacles the bill faced during the legislative process?
      8) Were outside events used to influence the bill’s success or failure?
  d. **A concise conclusion**

➢ **Topic 2:** Choose a topic in consultation with the professor based on an analysis of one of the following themes. You will want to refer to themes discussed in class in writing your analysis.

- An analysis of a particular committee hearing or series of hearings
- Congressional oversight of an executive agency or of an agency action
- The effectiveness or approach of particular committee chairs
- A study and analysis of a particular member or leader in the House or Senate
**General Guidelines**

1. Your paper must be at least 7 pages and no longer than 10 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, with Times New Roman 12 point font and standard 1 inch margins. The length does not include the title page or endnotes.

2. You must use the Chicago Manual Style method of documentation with endnotes. Consult *The Chicago Manual of Style* (14th Edition or later) if you have doubts about the proper format for quotes, citations, etc.

3. In addition to the language of your chosen bill, you must reference at least five additional sources. The following are acceptable sources for this project.
   - Congress.gov
   - The Congressional Record
   - Committee Reports
   - Committee Hearings
   - Committee Prints
   - Government Published Studies
   - Policy Briefs or Legislative Analyses (published by reputable organizations)
   - Books
   - Law Reviews
   - Peer Reviewed Journals
   - News Articles. You may refer to several, but no more than two will count toward the minimum source requirement. (Use the CSUSB Library’s database ProQuest Newsstand to find such articles.)

4. Plagiarism is the most offensive act a writer can commit. You must never represent the work of others as your own. If you use the words of an author, you must enclose the quotation in “quotes” (or, if it’s lengthy, set it off in block form) and give a proper citation. This is true whether you quote directly or paraphrase (i.e., rewrite the work in your own words). You must also give a proper citation even if you use only the ideas of an author. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism please consult the instructor. Be prepared to provide an electronic version of your paper to be tested for plagiarism. If you plagiarize you will receive an “F” for the assignment, and a request for disciplinary action will be submitted to the Dean of Students. You will not be given the opportunity to rewrite the paper.

5. Every paper must have this signed statement on the title page: “I understand the rules governing plagiarism and I certify that the work contained in this paper is my own. I have given appropriate citations for quotations and ideas that I have taken from other authors.” Signed ________.

6. An electronic copy of your research paper must be submitted to turnitin.com. Specific guidelines on using turnitin.com will be passed out in class.

7. Check the paper for errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Care should also be given to the organization of the paper. Papers must have a clear thesis and well thought out arguments that support the thesis in a coherent and readable way.

8. Papers are due on Friday, December 8 at 12:00pm. See the syllabus for the list of grade reductions given for papers turned in late. Late papers will not be accepted after 11:00pm on Sunday, December 10.