

Power in the Senate: A Game of Political Capital

Political Science 407

Congress and American Politics

Fall Semester 2005

“Admittedly, I was skeptical about the simulation at the start, but for the record, I did have a lot of fun with it. Thanks again. —testimony from real student.

Power in the Senate: A General Outline

The purpose of this simulation is to provide students with the opportunity to see first hand how a legislative body makes decisions about policy change. You will gain insight into the job of a legislator by experiencing the kinds of choices they face daily. As participants in this legislative exercise, you and your colleagues will gain from the experience what you put into it. It is essential that you adhere to your role at all times and that you prepare carefully for every aspect of the exercise. Please remember that this is only a game. Have fun with it, but please always display the utmost decorum and consideration for your peers.

OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

The simulation is a game of power-seeking and reputation-seeking in the U.S. Senate. The goal of the game is to accrue power, enhance your reputation, and get legislation passed. You will play the role of a member of the U.S. Senate: you will, in the game, represent an actual state. Like most Senators, among your primary concerns is getting reelected and getting public policy passed. This means attention will need to be paid to both your constituents as well as your co-partisans (especially your leadership). Unfortunately, these two concerns are not always in agreement!

Choosing a state: You will be asked to state a preference for a geographic area of the country. Based on this, you will be assigned a state. You will not assume the identity of the member who currently represents the state, but will create a “character” who represents the state. You will act as that character during all aspects of the simulation. In short, *you will be the Senator*.

Your party and ideology: You will also be assigned to either the Republican or Democratic Parties. Once the simulation begins, you can change your party, but doing so may have political repercussions. Just ask former Congressman Michael Forbes of New York. He changed parties in 1999 and was summarily trounced at the polls in 2000. Just like in the real Senate, some participants will find toeing the party line to be easy, while others will face cross pressures. Remember that your actions (speeches, votes, amendments, or bills proposed, etc.) will have direct ramifications for your reelection, popularity ratings, and reputation in the Senate.

STRUCTURE OF THE SENATE

Party and Chamber Leadership: At the beginning of the term, the two parties in each chamber will elect their leadership. For the Senate, the leadership positions are the majority leader, majority whip, minority leader, and minority whip. These individuals will be responsible for both the functioning of the Congress as a whole as well as organizing their own party caucus. Party leaders will:

- Decide committee assignments
- Coordinate the actions of the entire party membership
- Act as liaisons between committees
- Resolve disputes among party members
- Negotiate agreements between parties
- Organize floor deliberations

The Majority Leader in the Senate will have all the powers of the real office and will be responsible for familiarizing himself or herself with the procedures of the Senate. You should select your leadership wisely, as they will have a powerful effect on your ultimate level of power and reputation.

Committees: The Senate will have four committees. In the real chambers, the jurisdictions of these committees overlap somewhat, but not exactly.

In the Senate, the committees are:

- Foreign Relations
- Commerce, Science, and Transportation
- Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
- Energy and Natural Resources

Members not in the leadership will submit a ranking to their caucus leadership of their most-to-least desired committee assignments. The majority party leadership will determine the party allocation of seats on each committee and the leadership in each party will assign its members to one of these four committees. This is discussed in more detail below.

Committee Leadership: Once members have been granted their committee assignments, the majority and minority contingents of the committees will elect a Chair and Ranking Minority Member. These two individuals are responsible for the functioning of the committee. They will:

- Organize and manage committee meetings
- Coordinate the activities of their partisan colleagues on the committee
- Oversee the drafting of legislation
- Delegate responsibilities related to drafting legislation
- Work with the party leadership on passage of the caucus agenda
- Present bills to the entire chamber during floor sessions

Rank and File Membership: Members not part of the party or committee leadership are responsible for everything else that occurs in Congress. This largely means that they will help in construction of legislation, including:

- Researching current policy
- Collecting information on the policy preferences of those affected by the policy
- Crafting proposals for policy change
- Participating in floor debate
- Participating in Committee Hearings

THE MEDIA

No congressional simulation would be complete without the media. You will receive weekly media updates once the simulation begins. Those updates will include information about public opinion polls and other special events or circumstances in your state, such as an economic crisis, a disaster, or a future electoral challenger. There will be roving reporters watching the Senate action. One publication will be produced to keep you abreast of the action. It is my beloved *POL 407 Times*. It is part of your job to use the media to your electoral advantage. Feel free to issue press releases or even “leak” information to the press. Remember: the Washington media can be brutal. If you are not representing your constituents adequately, expect to read about it in the newspaper!

Several students will comprise the staff of the *POL 407 Times*. They will assume the role of journalists. They will “cover” the Senate and as such, serve as part of the staff of the *Times*. They will assist in the production of the newspapers, gather information, and generally serve as gadflies in the simulation. If you are a journalist, you will be expected to:

- Write *numerous* stories related to the simulation.
- Provide analysis of “survey data” for the newspaper.
- Participate in the production of the newspaper.
- Attend every session of the simulation and report accurately the events.

Grading and assignments for journalists are discussed below.

THE SENATE

“The other party is the opposition. The Senate is the enemy.” —a possibly apocryphal quote from member of the House leadership to a junior Congressman.

Professor Kanthak’s POL 407 class, which also meets this semester, will play the House. You will need to work with them, because legislation must pass both the House and the Senate in order to go to the President’s desk. You will have access to their email addresses and you are welcome to visit their class with permission (on simulation days only, please, and not INSTEAD of coming to this class!).

The blog

Washington D.C. is teeming with blogs these days. Most pundits credit the blogosphere with the downfall of former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, and there are few areas of Washington life not touched by blogs. In other words, no modern simulation would be complete without one. Our blog is titled The POL 407 Weblog: A Blog of Political Capital. Both classes share the blog. You will all be able to post messages to the blog, and you can use it as you choose. My vision of the blog is as a place to talk about what is going on in the simulation and to pass on information without the use of the pesky, old-fashioned press. Information can include gossip, musings on issues before the Congress, anything you can think of. Be sure, however, to USE DISCRETION when posting to the blog. I will not allow the blog to be used as a venue for students who haven’t outgrown their high school need to be petty and mean. The blog is meant to be fun, but posts that cross the line will be deleted, and offending students will AT LEAST lose power points. I will happily answer questions that might come up about the location of the line. You can find the blog at: <http://blog.ltc.arizona.edu/pol407/>.

GRADING AND PARTICIPATION

A significant portion of your grade is dependent upon your activities in the simulation. In all, 25 percent of your final grade will be determined by participation in the simulation game. Below, the specific assignments are discussed in detail. I highly recommend you familiarize yourself with these assignments and resolve any confusion you may have about them now rather than later. This is particularly the case for the “participation” component of your grade.

Constituency Connection Poster and Poster Session (worth 10 percent of total grade)

The first of the major simulation assignments for the game entail an academic analysis of the state you represent. By “academic,” I mean a reasonably sophisticated analysis of the socioeconomic and political characteristics of your state. You will do this assignment collaboratively, working with another same-state senator. Your analysis is not meant to be political and so I do not want to

see language like “in the great state of ...”. I also do not want your analysis and subsequent poster to be a proxy for a tourism ad. The poster should creatively represent your own research and analysis. Although it may be tempting to download documents from the web, inserting website language directly into your poster without attribution will constitute plagiarism. The first point here is: BE CAREFUL. The second point here is: make yourself aware of the Student Code of Conduct and how it pertains to plagiarism.

The objective of this poster is for you to learn about the political constraints and opportunities posed by your state and its constituency. There are several questions I want you to highlight in your poster. I outline them below.

1. What is the state’s ideological/partisan proclivities?

In class and readings, we will learn about “ideal points” and the spatial model. We will also learn that legislators are constrained by the “distance” between them and their constituents. Hence, an extremely liberal representative from a state that is conservative will, in general, not be able to *always* vote in accordance with his or her personal ideology. There is a constraint—the constituency—that “pulls” the legislator away from his or her preferred or “ideal” policy point. In order to understand the ideological constraints of your state, each of you needs to “estimate” the ideology “score” for your state and the variation around this score. To that end, I want you to compute the *average* percentage of the Democratic vote for the following elected offices:

Governor for the last two election cycles in the state
President for the 2000 and 2004 elections
Each Senator for the last two election cycles

So, for example, assume you were from state X and the percentage Democratic vote for the Governor in the last two election cycles was 38 and 42 percent; for the President it was 48 and 52 percent; for Senator 1 it was 29 and 32 percent; and for Senator 2 it was 58 and 56 percent. Your state’s “ideology score” would be

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{X} &= \frac{38 + 42 + 48 + 52 + 29 + 32 + 58 + 56}{8} \\ &= \frac{355}{8} \\ &= 44.375.\end{aligned}$$

That is, the average Democratic vote share across these 8 elections is about 44 percent. This would be indicative of a state that is more Republican than Democratic. Making some assumptions about the relationship between ideology and partisan makeup, we could conclude that this state is moderately conservative.¹ Now that you have an estimate of the state’s “ideology,” you need to

¹It is important to note that this is a very simple (and simplistic) way to measure “ideol-

generate an estimate of the variability in the state’s partisan/ideological proclivities. To explain why, suppose that the average Democratic vote share across each of the elections was 63 percent and the average “deviation” from one race to the next was only 1 percent (i.e. on average, there is only about a 1 percent difference across the 8 races)? Under this scenario, you would know that the state is fairly liberal *and* there is little variation in this “level” of liberalism. On the other hand, suppose the average deviation in the Democratic vote share was 23 percent? This means that on average, there is about a plus or minus 23 percent difference in the Democratic vote share across the 8 elections. Under this scenario, there is substantial variation. In the first scenario, there is more certainty in the estimate of the state’s ideology but possibly “less room to move” ideologically. In the second scenario, there is less certainty in the estimate but possibly “more room to move” ideologically.

To compute a measure of variability, you will need to compute the standard deviation of the Democratic vote share. This quantity is easy to compute. It is simply,

$$s.d. = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})^2}{n - 1}}.$$

For the previous example, the numerator inside the square root sign would be equal to

$$\begin{aligned} \sum(X_i - \bar{X})^2 = & (38 - 44.375)^2 + (42 - 44.375)^2 + (48 - 44.375)^2 + (52 - 44.375)^2 \\ & + (29 - 44.375)^2 + (32 - 44.375)^2 + (58 - 44.375)^2 + (56 - 44.375)^2 \end{aligned}$$

which would be 827.875 (this is the “sum of the squared deviations from the mean”). Dividing this number by $n - 1$ (or in this case, $8 - 1$) gives you $827.875/7 = 118.268$. In statistics, this number is known as the *variance*. Taking the square root of the variance gives you the standard deviation: $\sqrt{118.268} = 10.875$. This number has a very natural interpretation. It tells us that the average deviation in the Democratic vote share in this state is about plus or minus 11 percent (suppose the standard deviation were 1?).

If you compute these quantities, you will not only have an estimate of the state’s ideological/partisan proclivities, but also the variability around this estimate. In your poster, you will need to convey this information in an effective and informative manner; that is, I want you to provide a political “overview” of your state. What are its partisan/ideological “leanings” and what is the variability in these “leanings.” After you do this, I want you next to address a second fundamental question:

2. What is the connection between you, the Senator, and your constituency?

To do this, I want you to analyze the implications of these statistics for your ogy.” It has problems that I will discuss with you in class; however, as a baseline measure, it will be adequate for the purposes of the game.

subsequent behavior in the simulation game. This analysis will form the heart of your paper. In this analysis, I want you to compare what your “ideology score” is compared to your state’s score (you will have an estimate of your score based on a survey I administer in class). Is your score distant or close to the state’s estimate? What does this proximity (or lack thereof) likely imply about how you will play the game (i.e. bill introduction, voting, being a “good” or “bad” partisan)? You need to be careful and detailed in this analysis. Moreover, I want you also to consider the variability estimate. Does your state give you much “wiggle room” in your behavior? Why or why not? How might this affect how you play the game? Are you free to move “all over the map” or do you think the “room” with which you can move is affected by the “direction” of the variability? By this I mean the following: suppose you come from a state with an ideology score of 50 and variability estimate of 25. Suppose further that your own ideology score is 60 (you’re a bit of liberal). Even though you know the average variability around “50” is plus/minus 25 (or 25 to 75), how does this variability factor in to your being a liberal? Are you “free” to move to very conservative positions or are you effectively constrained by the liberals/Democrats in your state? You need to convey this information in your poster. Ultimately, what I’m asking you to do here is speculate about “who” your constituency is in the state and what is the “political range” of your behavior? After questions one and two are addressed, I want you next to consider issues likely to be important to you and your state.

3. What issues/policies are important to your state?

In order to represent your state, you need to understand some of the foundational issues that are important to your state. In order to address this, I want you first to find and report the following information:

- a. What was the growth rate of the state from 1990 to 2000 (in terms of population)? [Question relevant to growth/development issues.]
- b. Is the state’s population primarily found in rural or urban areas? [Question relevant to infrastructure/agricultural issues.]
- c. What is the percentage of the population that is black, Latino, and Asian? Is this percentage large (note that a state with a 20 percent black population has a very large black population). [Question relevant to racial/ethnic issues.]
- d. What is the median household income of the state (using most recent census data)? [Question relevant to employment, income distribution issues.]
- e. What is the median age (or average age if that is what you can find) in the state? Is it an aging state or a young state, in terms of population? [Question relevant to insurance, education issues.]

f. What is the percentage of college educated citizens in the state (using most recent census data)? [Question relevant to education, development, technology issues.]

g. What are the major geographical features of the state that may be politically relevant? [Question relevant to environmental, tourism, development issues.]

h. Does the military have a major presence in the state? [Question relevant to armed services, foreign affairs, military base issues.]

i. Are there any locations of concern for possible terrorist attacks? [Question relevant for homeland security issues.]

Using this information (and any other you deem important), think about the issues that would be politically important in this state. Your poster should include a political agenda for each state, which can simply be a short list of 3 or 4 priorities for the state (though these priorities may vary between the two Senators). Include a list of delegation priorities as well. If you cannot agree on one list, it is OK to have a couple of them, but you should be able to discuss WHY you couldn't come up with a unified list. This agenda should be politically "realistic" and produced in accordance with your analysis in questions 1 and 2 from above. Remember: a raging conservative cannot/would not credibly propose a liberal agenda. You are constrained in what you can do both by your own political views and your constituencies!

The poster will constitute 10 percent of your final grade in this course. There are five components to your poster grade:

1. Completeness and aesthetic appeal – 75 percent

I determine this portion of your grade, based on how well (and how accurately) you portray the political and social climate of your state, as outlined above.

2. Peer evaluations of posters – 5 percent

There will be two class days dedicated poster sessions. You are expected to present your own poster one day, and learn about the other posters on the other day. One part of your non-presenting days is ranking the posters being presented, on a scale from 1 to 10, 10 being best. You should use completeness and aesthetic appeal, as described above, to determine the quality of the posters. I will use these peer evaluations to determine this portion of your grade.

3. Colleague workload evaluations – 5 percent

Here's where it is important to be sure that you do your fair share of the work on the posters. Each of you will evaluate the students with whom

you collaborated on the poster. If you fail to pull your weight, expect to get poor evaluations!

4. Three questions – 10 percent

You will each be expected to submit three questions which are answerable based on the information on your poster. Note that your questions are your own work, and you should not collaborate with your fellow students with whom you created the poster. These questions may end up on a “scavenger hunt” which I will create. More information on this is given below. Questions are due in class on September 15.

5. Scavenger hunt – 5 percent

On the day you are NOT scheduled to present your poster, you will be given a list of questions, each of which is answerable based on the posters in the room that day. Your job is to visit each of the posters (which you will be doing anyway, as a result of your evaluative role explained above) and gather the information you need to answer the questions. The scavenger hunt assignment is due at the end of class.

Bill Proposal Assignment (worth 5 percent of your total grade; DUE Oct. 4)

Each Senator will be required to submit a legislative bill for consideration in the Senate. The content of this bill can cover any topic (that is permitted by Senatorial jurisdiction), though it is strongly recommended that you relate your legislation to one of the four committees in the simulation (this will increase the chances that action occurs on the bill). In a separate Word document, I will provide a template and some examples of proposed legislation.

The proposed legislation is the fuel that will power the legislative side of the simulation. The bills should be created by you and not simply downloaded from some congressional website. You *may* use existing legislation (or bills) to work from or to modify; however, I want you to write the legislation. From past experience, overly technical and lengthy pieces of legislation rarely get dealt with in the simulation game. Similarly, simplistic and exceptionally brief pieces of legislation also get short shrift. The best kind of proposal is one that has a tangible outcome—that is, it was one that tries the move the status quo. Appropriations bills are out of order. In the simulation, you can only write legislation to “authorize” spending (the distinction between appropriations and authorizations will be made in class).

In addition to crafting your own piece of legislation, you are also required to turn in 3 supporting documents. The first document is a press release explaining to the press/constituency/interest groups what it is you have done in introducing your legislation. This press release will be written by you as the Senator. As are the nature of press releases, it should be brief and to the point (and should extol your virtues!). The second document is a “Dear Colleague” letter. Typically, when House members or Senators introduce legislation, they

will also accompany the legislation with a “dear colleague” letter that explains to the other members what the bill is, what its intent is, and why you are introducing it. This letter is important because other Senators may not take the time to read the full legislation but they may take the time to read the letter. This letter should be written by you as the Senator. The third and most important supporting document is an explanation of why you introduced this piece of legislation. This document should be written by you as the student. It should contain a justification of why you’re doing what you’re doing as well as a detailed explanation of what you’re hoping to gain by introduction of the bill. As with all your actions, this justification needs to be written with an eye to your political constraints. What is it about your constituency (or the greater political world) that prompted this legislation? Finally, I want you to speculate about the likelihood for success of this bill. Is the bill ideologically to the left, right, or center? Given the makeup of the current simulated Senate, do you think this bill will make it out of committee? Would it likely pass on the floor? Why or why not. This will require some analysis on your part.

When you turn this assignment in, you will need to do the following: send Professor Jones an *electronic* copy (preferably in Word or in rtf format) of the bill, the press release, and the “Dear Colleague” letter. These three items should be saved in **one file**. The justification of the bill should be submitted to me in hard copy format in class (that is, do not send me an electronic copy of this component). Finally, you will need to submit **two hard copies of the bill, press release, and “Dear Colleague” letter**, one each to the majority and minority leader. The leadership will need hard copies to make their referrals to the committees. It is absolutely essential that you follow these directions. Failure to do so may result in a 0 on this assignment.

Simulation Participation: The Power Game (worth 10 percent of your total grade).

The simulation game is only a worthwhile experience if everyone participates. Participation is therefore essential and required. Indeed, it is your day-to-day participation that will make the simulation a “game.” Note that since participation in the simulation is worth 10 percent of your total grade, failure to participate will garner you a 0 and hence make it very difficult to earn an “A” grade. In short, participation is pretty important!

To make things interesting, participation will be intimately linked to the game through the use of “political power” points. Just as in the real Senate, power and reputation must be earned. Hence, over the course of the semester, your actions in the simulation (through in-class work, issuance of press releases, and other activities) will be closely monitored. Strong, meaningful participation will be rewarded just as hardworking Senators are rewarded by accruing power and enhancing their reputation in the real Senate. Conversely, lackadaisical, lazy, or sloppy “participation” will result in power and reputational loss. As in the real Senate, “bad” partisans, backbenchers, and lazy Senators are not

rewarded with power and indeed, may be subject to sanctions.

Here is how the power game will work. On Aug. 25, each of you will be assigned a party and a state to represent. Additionally, each of you will be randomly assigned a number between 0 and 1 using a random number generator (based on the uniform distribution). From this assignment, I will split the class into equal thirds. Higher scores will represent greater “seniority;” lower scores represent lesser “seniority.” After assigning you your seniority level, I will determine your entry-level power score. All Senators on day 1 will enter with “1 point” of political capital. As in the real Senate, you presumably have some semblance of power simply by proving your electability to an important political office. However, since power and reputation are enhanced, somewhat, by seniority (this, by the way, is more of truism in the U.S. House than in the U.S. Senate), your level of power will be increased, initially, by your “time in the Senate.” Specifically, Senators scoring in the lower third on the random power generator will receive no additional power bonus; Senators scoring in the middle third will receive 1 additional power point; Senators scoring in the upper third will receive 2 additional power points. Since your seniority is randomly assigned, you may feel this initial allocation is unfair. But you should bear in mind that power points in this game will be highly fluid. It will be easy to gain and easy to lose points. Indeed, more senior members may find themselves at greater risk of losing points than less senior members, particularly on “blown votes.” In short, the playing field will level out in very short order!

Here is the kicker: your power score is directly tied to your participation grade. If you end up with 5 power points, you end up earning 5 percent on your participation grade (i.e. 5 out of 10 percent). That is, *your participation score is linked point-for-point with your power score*. If you end up with 10 points, you will earn the full 10 percent. For every point over 10, you will earn 1 percent additional “extra credit” up to a maximum of 5 percent extra credit. The point allocation system creates an incentive to participate. Failing to participate will result in point loss (and grade depreciation). Keep in mind that since you can lose power, you can end up with a negative score. At the end of the game, any student with 0 (or a negative score) will receive a 0 for their participation grade, no questions asked. Hence, if you find yourself in trouble early, it will be up to you to dig yourself out.

As noted, power is fluid. It ebbs and flows. To put some structure on the game, below are some general guidelines for how points can be added or subtracted. Importantly, you should recognize at the start that I am not going to be the sole arbiter of points. While I will have primacy over the point system and will have the final say-so over your final game score, there are some twists and turns to be aware of. First, the leadership (majority or minority) has the authority to take away as well as allocate power points. You may ask why these Senators have this power. In the real Senate, the cache of being in the leadership is having some say-so over the goings on in the Senate. As we will learn in class, the leadership has both positive and negative power. Positively, the leaders can provide “cover” for you in the event you have to make a tough vote. In the context of our game, the leaders may find it necessary to allocate

some power points to you from time-to-time. Negatively, the leadership can take away points. For example, suppose you renege on a deal or vote against the leadership on an important vote? In this case, the leaders may impose sanctions on you in the form of taking away some of your power. You should also be aware that the opposite party leadership will have the right to *give* points to you, though they will not have the right to take away points from members of the opposition party. Finally, member-to-member transactions are permissible if mutually agreed upon by the two parties. For example, Senator A may need Senator B's vote. In order to gain this vote, Senator A may offer Senator B a power point(s). In the future, Senator B may reciprocate. This kind of exchange is sometimes referred to as "logrolling." To elaborate on all this, below are some basic rules of exchange.

Power Additions

Below are some ways that you can gain power in the simulation game. I've roughly divided the additions into 4 classes.

Professorial Additions:

If the Senator displays a creative use of Senatorial rules and/or displays an understanding of Senatorial procedure above and beyond a textbook understanding of the process, Professor Jones may allocate 1 or more points to the Senator. Further, at the end of the simulation game, if Professor Jones has determined the student was consistently at the top of his or her game, some additional points may be allocated. In general, this latter kind of addition will only occur for truly exceptional behavior.

Press Additions/Constituency Additions/White House Additions:

These kinds of additions are in direct response to how you play the game politically. For example, a strong defense of your actions (votes, bill initiation, response to some crisis) may prompt the press or your constituency to allocate power points. Further, a "vote of courage" may be rewarded with additional power. This reward may come from the press, the constituents, or the White House (the President really needed your vote and you came through). Finally, the press and/or the constituency may retrospectively reward you with power after having looked over the corpus of your work in the simulation. Ultimately, Professor Jones will determine this kind of allocation (and note that Professor Jones "plays" both the role of your constituents and the White House) in consultation with the *POL 407 Post* journalists.

Leadership/Committee Leader Additions

As noted above, the leadership may find it necessary to give you a "protective shield" if you are faced with a tough vote. Under this scenario, the leaders may allocate power points to you in order to mitigate any possible political fallout from your vote (i.e. the leaders give you political capital to expend on their behalf). Additionally, the leadership may seek to reward good partisans for their work by granting power points. Importantly (leaders take note!), *any*

allocation of power from the leadership to another Senator is taken directly from the leader's own power budget. Thus, stingy leaders may be unwilling to part from his or her power (which could in turn lead to sanctions being imposed on the leader by the press!). Because leaders can allocate power, there is a bonus to getting elected leader: if elected majority leader, you will immediately gain 5 power points; if elected minority leader, you will immediately gain 4 power points. The two whips will each gain 3 power points. For their part, the ranking committee leader will immediately gain 4 power points while the ranking minority member will gain 3 power points. As with leaders, committee leaders can allocate power if they deem it necessary.

Member-to-Member Transactions

Simply put, Senators may logroll. They may lobby other members or indeed, “buy” votes so to speak. This means that if mutually agreed upon, one member may allocate power to another member. But take note, any transactions of this type are zero-sum: if you give one point to another member, you lose one point from your own power budget.

Power Subtractions

You can gain ... but you can just as easily lose. Power is fluid. Blow a vote, lose some power. Anger the White House, lose some power (potentially). Members of the Senate face cross-pressures. You will have to weather the storm. There are three classes of deductions.

Professorial Deductions:

If you miss an in-class simulation day, **there will be a mandatory 2 point power deduction.** This is punitive but is a necessary evil. When you are absent, everyone in the simulation game is affected. Additionally, if the student incorrectly uses the rules or grossly misunderstands Senatorial procedure, there will be a 1 point deduction per infraction. Rule are important. You will learn them and live them. If not, you will suffer the consequences! Finally, a violation of Senatorial courtesy (i.e. using Senator's names during proceedings, calling each other names, hurling insults) will result in a 1 point deduction. Creative Senators can be scathing while also maintaining “courtesy.”

Press Deductions/Constituency Deductions/White House Deductions

If the press or your constituency interprets your actions as exceeding the constraints imposed on you by your constituents, then you will be liable to a power deduction. For example, a “blown vote” or acting in manner that defies explanation will hurt you. A “faux pas” or a scandal may result in power deductions. Further, if you are a “bad partisan” or show yourself to be vulnerable to special interests (i.e. you “cave in”), the press, your constituency, or the White House may deduct power. Finally, we reserve the right to grant retrospective deductions if you prove to be a “do-nothing” backbencher.

Leadership/Committee Leader Deductions

The leaders from your own party have the right to take away power points. For example, if your renege on a deal, blow a vote, or are, in the leader's eyes, a "bad partisan," the leadership may deduct 1 power point per infraction. As with leaders, committee leaders may also deduct power points for the reasons given above.

To help you play the game, here are some tips and recommended strategies.

First, any transfer of power (either by the leaders or by members) needs to be reported to me or my assistant *immediately*. I will maintain a database of power points and will update it daily. **WHAT I SAY GOES. THIS MEANS THAT MY ACCOUNTING OF POINTS IS ABSOLUTELY OFFICIAL. IF YOU DO NOT REPORT TRANSACTIONS (POINTS GAINED/LOST), THEN GAINS (OR LOSSES) WILL NOT SHOW UP IN MY DATA BASE. YOU ARE OUT OF LUCK IF YOU FIND YOURSELF IN THIS SITUATION.** The solution to this is easy: report all transactions to me. If you are a leader and you take away points, indicate who lost points. If you allocate points, indicate who gained the points. The same goes for member-to-member transactions. Remember that sacrificing some of your power may actually help you later on. Hence, reporting deductions is as important as reporting additions. If you are ever in doubt about your point score, consult me immediately.

Second, recognize that you will inevitably face cross-pressures. Angering the leadership may actually please your constituents. So remember Newton's 3rd Law: whenever one body exerts a force on a second body, the second body exerts a force of equal magnitude and opposite direction on the first body. In political terms, we might modify this law: losing a power point may gain you multiple power points. Conversely, a gain in power may be more than offset by loss in power. The trick is: be aware. What are the pressures out there? Where are your constituents? Where is your leadership? Think before you leap!

Third, recognize that you can mitigate damage by defending your actions. Senators do this all the time. This strategy is akin to "softening the blow." Make sure you issue press releases. Make sure you claim credit. Make sure you take politically expedient issue positions. Note that you will *not* gain a point for every press release you issue; on the other hand, doing nothing will surely result in lost prestige (and power points).

Fourth, go on the offensive. If the leadership takes away points (or the press, or constituents, or the White House), alert the press of this. The press in turn may grant you power (i.e. "you're a courageous member") while taking away power from the leadership (or some other member). No action occurs in a vacuum. You have control over a wide swath of the action.

Fifth, KNOW THE RULES. I cannot stress this strategy enough. Powerful Senators know the rules. They know how to creatively use them and bend them to their will. If you display a keen understanding of the Senate's standing rules, I guarantee you will be rewarded.

Sixth, come to class. You won't gain power by showing up, but at least you won't lose power by missing class. Remember: mandatory 2 point deduction for each missed in-class simulation day.

Seventh, work behind the scenes. Sometimes the best Senators are "quiet" Senators. They work to make things happen outside of the limelight. One important strategy is for you to copy to me any e-mail correspondence you share with other Senators. This correspondence (which will remain private and confidential unless you specify otherwise) will give me a sense of the "hidden" work you are doing.

So, this is the power game. Your participation grade is directly linked to your power score. As I've said throughout, the power game is fluid. Expect to gain and lose points frequently. Where you're at on the last day of the simulation is up to you!

Alternate Grading for Journalists

Obviously, journalists will be unable to use the same grading system outlined above. To that end, the 25 percent of the course grade for journalists is divided the following way.

Detailed analysis of survey and Scavenger Hunt– 10 percent

Each journalist will write a five-page article analyzing a survey handed out to all of the simulation Members of the House. The article will be in the style of a news feature and will serve as an introduction to the upcoming Congress. The article should include both detailed analysis of the survey and interviews with members of the House. The best article will serve as the featured article in the *POL 407 Post*. Of this 10 percent of your grade, 95 percent will be based on the article, and 5 percent on your completion of the scavenger hunt, as detailed above.

Two long features – 5 percent [2.5 percent each]

Over the course of the semester, you will each write two long features (2-3 pages) to appear in the *POL 407 Post*. The feature will be on a topic of your choosing, in consultation with Professor Jones and the other journalists. The features will be graded for substance and for style (grammar matters!).

Short articles – 10 percent

You will also be responsible for writing short articles that will be graded based on the same criteria as described above. Each article will be worth a maximum of 1 "point" (or percent if you like . . . it doesn't matter!). For example, if you write an article and receive an 80 percent on it, you have received .80 of a point in the class. If you write 10 articles and receive 80 percent on each of them, then you get 8 points or equivalently, 8 percent of the available 10 percent. You

may hand in as many articles as you like and you may receive up to 15 points (i.e. 5 percent extra credit is possible), thus mirroring the grading system for “power points.”