In recent years, Congressional approval ratings and legislative output have been at historic lows, yet the incumbent re-election rate has remained at normally high levels. What factors contribute to these outcomes and explain these apparent disparities? Why does Congress seem to be so dysfunctional yet efforts to reform and improve the institution repeatedly run up against opposition? How can Congress continue to do "business as usual" in the face of widespread dissatisfaction? In this course, we will tackle these questions by examining the Congressional election system and the structure, organization, powers, and operations of Congress, with particular emphasis on the dynamics of Congressional politicking and the obstacles to passing legislation.