

## Congress, the Constitution, and Contemporary Politics

*Congress, the Constitution, and Contemporary Politics* explores the theoretical foundations of the legislative branch, from the representative bodies of ancient Rome and Greece, the creation of the American bicameral Congress at the Philadelphia Convention, the powers of Congress, and the expansion and change of congressional power over time.

With a growing partisan divide in today's Congress, we will explore questions of whether Congress is fulfilling its constitutional responsibilities of representing the people, deliberating issues, successfully legislating for the common good, and exercising its oversight of the executive. We will also pay particular attention to the institutional changes within the legislative branch, covering congressional elections and the role of party and committee leadership. By the end of the course, you should have an informed opinion on whether Congress is indeed the "broken branch" and whether further institutional reform is necessary.