

Preliminary Agenda

TheCapitol.Net's
Capitol Hill Workshop
Defense Focus

February 8-10, 2006
Washington, D.C.

Day One: Wednesday, February 8, 2006
Location: TBA

8:30 Welcome and Introductions
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The Dynamics of Congress

CD Chapter 1

An expert on Congress will discuss the dynamics of the legislative process and the three key elements that drive today's institution: politics, policy, and procedure. She will illuminate the differences between the House and Senate and the nature of the 109th Congress. Be apprised of what to expect at the beginning of the second session of the 109th, especially for the defense/security community.

9:45 Break

10:00 Today's Legislative Process

CD Chapter 8

The instructor will briefly review how a bill becomes a law by tracking legislation from introduction and referral to committee, through committee hearings and markups, floor consideration, to final passage and presidential action.

12:00 Lunch

1:15 Politics and Leadership in the 109th Congress

CD Chapter 7

The instructor will examine the formal and informal leadership structures in the House and Senate, focusing on key defense-oriented leaders and committee assignments. He will analyze the politics, personalities, and policy agendas of the major players of the 109th Congress, and comment on the issues that will be given first, second, and third priority.

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Day One: Wednesday, February 8, 2006

Location: TBA

2:30 Break

2:45 Policy Making in Congress

CD Chapters 3, 4

Policy development and decision making in Congress are influenced by many forces. Learn how this occurs in macro and micro settings. Discussion will include the role of the electorate and political parties, as well as Congress' interactions with the White House, executive agencies, the media, and other political players. The instructor will assess what these factors mean for policy making in Congress, and for the defense/security community.

4:00 Day One concludes

*** We recommend that attendees bring their program folders and Congressional Deskbook to the Workshop each day.*

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Day Two: Thursday, February 9
Location: TBA

8:30 Welcome and Introductions

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Congressional Budgeting Today

CD Chapter 9

This session will introduce the congressional budget process, the major players, procedures, and timing of decisions, with emphasis on development of the defense portion of the budget. The President's newly released budget, authorizations, appropriations, and reconciliation will be reviewed. Participants will see the "big picture" of federal budgeting, and where defense and security issues fit in. *(A short break will be taken at approximately 9:45 a.m.)*

10:30 Break

10:45 How the Media Covers the Big Beats: The White House, Capitol Hill, and Pentagon

CD Chapter 3

A reporter will discuss who comprises the Washington press corps, and how they cover the big beats in DC, especially DoD and the Pentagon. Questions to be addressed include: how forthcoming are these institutions with information, what role does the media play in shaping policy debate within these institutions, and what role does it play in elections, campaigns, or in a "war" environment.

11:45 Lunch

1:00 Washington Lobbying: Communicating Effectively with Congress *CD Chapters 4,10*

This session will provide an overview of the current political environment on Capitol Hill and the role of lobbying in today's legislative process. Discussion will focus on how outside interests, including executive agencies, can educate and communicate effectively with members of Congress and staff to build positive working relationships. The instructor will provide practical suggestions for interacting with members of Congress, as well as important "do's" and "don'ts" of communicating with Congress since September 11 and the discovery of anthrax in congressional mail.

2:00 Break

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Day Two: Thursday, February 9

Location: TBA

**2:15 Presidential-Congressional Relations and Their Impact on the
2004 Presidential Election**

CD Chapter 10

This session will examine the president's role in the legislative process, how this role evolved, and how the president sets his legislative agenda in Congress today. What characteristics determine a president's success in passing his legislative agenda? The instructor will compare how the balance of power between the executive and legislative branches has shifted over time, and he will assess White House-Congressional relations in the 109th Congress.

3:30 Complete Evaluations and Day Two Concludes

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Day Three: Friday, February 10

Location: TBA

8:30 Introduction

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Defense and Security Issues in the 109th Congress

This session will provide insight into the key players and national security issues Congress is likely to address in its second session. The instructors will examine the relationship between the Pentagon, defense agencies, Director of National Intelligence, and the Department of Homeland Security, and evaluate how Congress will distribute its time and resources to deal with defense and security issues, budget deficits, and domestic priorities.

9:35 Break

9:45 Congressional Relations from a DoD Perspective

A representative from the Department of Defense will discuss the role of congressional liaison offices in establishing and building working relationships with Congress, both committees of jurisdiction and personal offices of members. He will discuss the organization and responsibilities of his legislative affairs team, how a legislative affairs shop can educate and work most effectively with Capitol Hill, and lobbying restrictions of which to be aware.

10:45 Break

11:00 A Member's Perspective on Politics and Policy

CD Chapters 2, 3, 4

A former member of Congress who served on a defense-related committee will comment on the many pressures and responsibilities that a member must balance in day-to-day decision and policy making. Discussion will include how members advance their legislative and political agenda; deal with large amounts of incoming mail; handle fund raising and press operations; get reelected, and more.

12:00 Lunch

1:15 Campaign and Election Trends and Their Impact

CD Chapter 2

The instructor will take an insightful look at the current trends in how campaigns, political communication and elections are conducted in the United States, citing examples from the 2004 campaigns. He will review the political landscape of the United States and interpret what it means for future elections.

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Day Three: Friday, February 10

Location:

2:30 Break

2:45 The Work of Personal and Committee Staff

CD Chapter 5

A congressional staff member who focuses on defense related issues will discuss the work environment on the Hill including the positions and responsibilities of committee and personal staff, and the organization of congressional offices. He will focus on what staffers need or expect from outside interests, and how these interests can build strong working relationships with staffers and the Hill. The staffer will also reveal his insights into the dynamics and agendas of his office.

3:45 Complete Evaluations and Workshop Concludes

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