Congressional Research Grant Application 2015

The application form is located at [http://www.dirksencenter.org/print_grants_CRGs.htm](http://www.dirksencenter.org/print_grants_CRGs.htm). The form was prepared in Microsoft Word. Please enter information in the highlighted areas—you may cut and paste from another source.

In the case of joint proposals, only the lead applicant should complete the proposal and submit the curriculum vita. List co-applicants in the designated space.

Do not submit the “overhead waiver letter” with the application. If you are chosen, we will request the letter at that time.

**REMINDER:** Graduate students must be in the dissertation stage and must arrange for a letter of reference to be sent directly to Frank Mackaman at fmackaman@dirksencenter.org. The letter should be prepared on institutional letterhead and sent as a signed pdf file.
Congressional Research Grant Application 2015

1.0 Applicant Information (Lead Applicant)

Name (include prefix):  C. Damien Arthur

Institutional affiliation (include department):  Marshall University - Department of Political Science

Faculty rank (if applicable):  Assistant Professor

Contact email:  arthur133@marshall.edu

Check here if a graduate student:  

2.0 Project Title:

The Constitutional Fight for the Power of the Purse: Robert C. Byrd’s Entrepreneurial Defeat of the Presidential Line Item Veto

3.0 Project Abstract (not to exceed 100 words):

Emphasizing his leadership and influence on the Senate Appropriations Committee (1989 – 2009), this project explores Robert C. Byrd’s entrepreneurial fight to eradicate the presidential Line-Item Veto. Using the latent data in the archives at the Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies to construct an empirical assessment, this project demonstrates Byrd’s leadership in limiting what he perceived as a constitutional dereliction and the infelicitous expansion of presidential authority within budgetary power. This research offers insight into the study of the resources, techniques, and institutional conditions of senatorial entrepreneurship.

4.0 Amount Requested (not to exceed $3,500):  $3230

5.0 Project Description
Describe the project’s goals, methods, and intended results demonstrating its importance to the grant program’s priorities. This is the most essential part of the application.
Project Description

During a controversial debate regarding presidential powers over the budget, Senator Robert C. Byrd said, "The basic power which is probably more fundamental than any other power in the Constitution is the power of the purse." He operated under the imperative that Congress was responsible for spending and prioritizing the taxpayers’ money, not the president (Neustadt, 1993). Senator Byrd was a staunch defender of the powers of Congress over what he perceived as the persistent encroachment of presidents. Byrd, self-proclaimed guardian of the Constitution, once said, "Gaius Julius Caesar did not seize power in Rome, the Roman Senate thrust power on Caesar deliberately, with forethought, with surrender, with intent to escape from responsibility.” This project explores Robert C. Byrd’s entrepreneurial fight to eradicate the presidential line item veto while Chairman and Ranking Member of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee (1989 – 2009), a position that wielded great influence (McCubbins, Noll, & Weingast, 1987). His leadership on the Appropriations Committee offered Senator Byrd a powerful opportunity for access to specific benefits that he utilized to ensure that the president’s power within budgetary decisions was checked, in an effort to maintain, for him, a significant constitutional authority of the Congress – the power of the purse (Adler, 2000; LeLoup, 1980; Kirst, 1969; McCubbins, Noll, & Weingast, 1987).

Extant research indicates that congressional members seek access to powerful committees because of the benefits the committee offers them (Weingast & Marshall, 1988; Ferejohn, 1974). In other words, members seek access to the Appropriations Committee because it potentially offers them solutions to their perceived problems or agendas (Adler, 2000; Kiewiet & McCubbins, 1991). Many members now operate under the assumption that directing money back to their states or specific constituents is the primary goal and reason for appointment to the Appropriations Committee (Lee, 2000; Fiorina, 1989; Adler, 2000; Mayhew, 1974). Committee members tend to support the recommendations of the committee, which is mostly and highly swayed by the chairperson of that committee (Maltzman, 1998). Moreover, the ‘norms’ that are established during committee facilitate in molding the behavior of members on the floor, reinforcing the notion that Senator Byrd is advancing his agenda (Maltzman, 1998).

Consequently, the senior leadership position on this committee offers control over benefits to a greater extent than junior members receive, substantial power over the purse of the United States (Maltzman, 1998). Senator Byrd’s leadership on the Appropriations Committee provided him with the deciding authority as to whether projects for specific constituents were approved or rejected, as well as significant influence over presidential spending priorities, garnering substantial bargaining power (Lee, 2000; Fiorina, 1989; Adler, 2000; Mayhew, 1974). This enabled him to use his leadership position to offer rewards for those that aligned with his ideological suppositions regarding the balance of power between the Congress and the Presidency, particularly the constitutionality of the presidential line item veto.

Goals

This study seeks to demonstrate how Senator Byrd utilized his position on the Appropriations Committee to entrepreneurial defeat the presidential line item veto, properly aligning, for him, the correct balance of power between Congress and the Presidency (Lee, 2000). It continues an examination of the congressional papers of Robert C. Byrd, namely, the legislative sub-series on Appropriations. I have already spent, last July, a week at the Center wherein I researched, organized, and coded the topical series on the Line Item Veto 1989 – 2009. I was awarded a $5000.00 travel and equipment grant for the summer of 2014. However, I must spend more time at the Center to complete the research. Special attention needs to be paid to the actions he took, as chairman and ranking member, while serving in the leadership roles on the Appropriations Committee. An analysis of the aforementioned letters will consider a
plethora of variables that contribute to the discussion, variables that predict congressional behavior: party affiliation, chamber control, monetary rewards, vote trades, and committee membership as well as presidential party and presidential approval rating.

Methodology

This research utilizes the latent data in the congressional papers of Robert C. Byrd, namely, the legislative sub-series on Appropriations, his case-work correspondence, and his personal papers sub-series from 1989 – 2009. The archives at the newly constructed Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies at Shepherd University empower such an analysis and offer insight into the study of the resources, techniques, and institutional conditions of congressional leadership and the balance of power between the Congress and the Presidency (Frisch, Harris, Kelley, & Parker, 2012). Using the archives to gather data, I will perform a content analysis of Senator Byrd’s letters to federal agencies, his press releases, and official actions as a leader on the Appropriations Committee. I can then code those documents to empirically ascertain how Senator Byrd uses his leadership position on the Appropriations Committee to curb presidential power, namely eradicating the Line-Item Veto.

The most pertinent research questions for this project consists of:

RQ1: Given Senator Byrd’s powerful position on the Appropriations Committee, what type of actions do we see him employ to curb presidential power from 1989 – 2009?

RQ1a: As seen in his Committee Chairmanship and Ranking Member actions, correspondence letters, and press releases, in what way do these actions differ during the push for the Line Item Veto during the Reagan and Clinton Presidencies?

RQ2: Do the mechanisms by which Senator Byrd enables the allocation money to all states help him to accomplish his own goal of securing measures that limit the expansion of presidential power?

RQ2a: How does Senator Byrd ‘whip’ other members, as seen in his letters and press releases, to draw support for his agenda?

RQ2b: As seen in his casework correspondence, how does Senator Byrd use limitation riders as a tactic for persuading agencies and other members to support or back away from funding and policy decisions that expand or contract presidential power?

RQ3: In what capacity do the identified variables (party affiliation, chamber control, and committee membership as well as presidential party, presidential approval, and war-time status) predict Senator Byrd’s congressional behavior?

Intended Results

Robert C. Byrd is the longest serving Senator and member of Congress in American history, nine consecutive terms. He represented West Virginia for over half a century, never losing an election—sometimes running unopposed. Senator Byrd cast more votes in the Senate than any other member, surpassing 19,000 votes. He was elected Senate Majority Leader on two separate occasions, unseating Ted Kennedy. Moreover, he was the longest serving Chairman of the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee. Analyzing the congressional papers of,
arguably, one of the most vigorous, dynamic, and entrepreneurial Senators in modern history offers insight into the study of the resources, techniques, and institutional conditions of senatorial leadership.

Many have not undertaken an empirical study of the leadership and entrepreneurship of Senator Robert C. Byrd, mainly because of the vastness of his time and work while serving the people of West Virginia in Congress. How does one theoretically decipher the appropriate way to narrow Byrd’s leadership into one specific topic for an empirical study? I think the project that I have been working on and propose to the grant committee does this satisfactorily. Senator Byrd was well known for his persistent approach to the power of the legislative branch and its supremacy in budgetary priorities, particularly against the encroachment of the executive power. My analytical approach to this consists of tracing the entrepreneurial actions of a dynamic and interesting Senator and his role in one of the most fascinating turf battles between the Congress and the President – the line item veto.

I intend to use the data from this endeavor as the foundation for an academic journal article, fulfilling my responsibilities to publish. Moreover, this article on Senator Byrd’s involvement in the line item veto is a chapter in a book length manuscript addressing the comprehensive discussion of Robert C. Byrd’s Leadership on the Appropriations Committee. Secondarily, given that I teach at a university in West Virginia, this research could masterfully inform my undergraduate and graduate courses on Policy Development, The American Congress, and Constitutional Law, allowing me to focus my research on a salient aspect of the discipline, which should translate into a better, more researched class for all of the students to experience. The research could easily enable me to offer a class on Robert C. Byrd, particularly his leadership and importance to West Virginia.

Significance and Relationship to Existing Scholarship

Research is, however, incomplete, with regard to how individual Senators have utilized their leadership positions and influence on the Appropriations Committee, particularly how the committee’s actions shape national policy (McCubbins, Noll, & Weingast, 1987). Functioning in the ‘claimant’ model of membership on the Appropriations Committee, wherein members perceive their access to committee responsibilities in relation to their own interests and the benefits the committee bestows upon them and their constituents, Senator Robert C. Byrd worked tirelessly to ‘whip’ members, forge coalitions, and advance his ideological agenda (Adler, 2000). In modern history, Senator Byrd is the quintessential Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Senator Byrd took great care in working within the rules and procedures of the Senate to direct money, rewards, and specific projects as a mechanism of securing favor with other policy-makers and constituents in an attempt to eradicate the presidential line item veto. Therefore, a study of the Appropriations Committee leadership of Robert C. Byrd and how he entrepreneurially utilized the resources, employed fastidious techniques, and shaped the institutional conditions and norms of the Appropriation Committee is paradigmatic of the change in the ‘Guardian of the Treasury’ model and indicative of the ‘claimant’ model of congressional committee member assignments and the leadership of those members (Adler, 2000; LeLoup, 1980; Kirst, 1969; McCubbins, Noll, & Weingast, 1987).

6.0 Project Budget (not to exceed one-half page):

I request a total of $3,230 to help with this research at the Robert C. Byrd Center for Legislative Studies at Shepherd University in Shepherdstown, WV. I need assistance from the Congressional Research Grant at the Dirksen Congressional Center for primarily two reasons:
Travel and Accommodation to the Center for Legislative Studies in Shepherdstown, WV and
coding help from a Graduate Research Assistant. I would travel to the Center in July and stay
for 5 days and 6 nights in a Hotel. Driving to the Center is not only easier, it is less expensive,
as it is in a remote, historical town in West Virginia. The Center is about 300 miles from my
current University and necessitates staying for a full work week to ensure that I have time to
differentiate, process, and organize all of the latent data while I am at the Center. This cost is
estimated to be about $2,030.

Moreover, I request funds to pay for assistance in processing and coding the considerable
amount of data that will be assembled. In addition to the principal investigator, I need a part-
time graduate research assistant to assist with organizing and coding the data from the 20-
year span of Byrd’s tenure on the Appropriations Committee, which is 194 linear feet (35.5 for
Appropriations and 158.5 for Casework Correspondence). At my University, a responsible,
reliable part-time (20hrs per week for 4 weeks) research assistant will charge approximately
$15/hour. Total cost for this support is estimated at $1,200 (80 hours @ $15/hour).

All of the supplies, equipment, and workspace needed to undertake this project have been
graciously provided by my University.

7.0 Curriculum Vita/Resume (not to exceed two pages):

Department of Political Science
Smith Hall 739G
Marshall University
One John Marshall Drive
Huntington, WV 25755
arthur133@marshall.edu

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Marshall University
Department of Political Science
Assistant Professor of Public Administration and Policy (August 2014 - Present)

West Virginia State University
Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences
Assistant Professor of Political Science (August 2012 - August 2014)

EDUCATION

West Virginia University Department of Political Science
Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science) -- 2013
M.A. (American Public Policy) -- 2010
M.P.A. (Public Administration) -- 2008

Boston University School of Theology
M.T.S. magna cum laude (Religion & Culture) -- 2006

Gordon College
B.A. (Theological Studies) -- 2004
BOOKS

REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES


GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS
2014 West Virginia State University Research and Development Corporation: Promoting Excellence in Education through Research (PEER) Grant. $5000.
2013 West Virginia State University Research and Development Corporation: Faculty Development Grant. $3935.
2013 West Virginia State University Research and Development Corporation: Program Development Grant. $6000.

CONFERENCE PAPERS
2014 "The Protected Faithful?: Government Response to Religious Child Abuse” — Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) (Indianapolis, IN)
2012 "The Shifting Presidential Stance on Immigration in the Twenty-First Century” - With Joshua Woods - North Central Sociological Association - Pittsburgh, PA
2010 "The Perfect Storm: Subsystem Dynamics, Policy Entrepreneurs, and Neo-Institutionalism’s Agenda Control of Same-Sex Adoption in U.S. Adoption Policy” -- American Political Science Association (Poster) -- (Washington, DC)

8.0 Co-Applicant Name(s) and Institutional Affiliation(s) [if applicable]:

IMPORTANT: When printed, this application must not exceed 10 pages. Thank you.