

GU POLITICS FELLOW CONGRESSMAN PATRICK MURPHY DISCUSSION GROUP OUTLINE

POLITICS FROM THE MILLENNIAL POINT OF VIEW

*ONE OF THE FIRST MILLENNIALS IN CONGRESS SHARES HIS POLITICS, PROCESS,
AND PERSPECTIVE FOR A MORE REPRESENTATIVE WASHINGTON*

Discussion Group Synopsis

Congressman Murphy was among the first millennials elected to Congress, and at age 29, was the youngest member of the 2012 freshman class. He arrived at the cusp of generational change in Washington as more and more members born in the 1980s began taking charge in the halls of Congress. Over the course of the semester, Congressman Murphy and his guests will discuss political and legislative issues of importance to millennials, what modern politicking is like in the era of social media, and the need for new – and younger – points of view inside the Beltway.

Week 1 – Congress From the Millennial Point of View

Relatively apolitical before he decided to run, Patrick took a different path to Washington than the vast majority of Senators and Representatives. He will discuss what spurred him to throw his hat in the ring, how his life changed once the campaign began, and how millennials can bring a unique perspective to the halls of Congress. Patrick will also walk through a typical week in Washington and what members are expected to get done, from voting to fundraising to committees to press to working on bills. He'll also discuss how one's priorities can get distorted once the pressure of an upcoming campaign heats up.

Week 2 – The Gig Economy and the Future of Jobs

Patrick will be joined by members of Future Forum, a congressional caucus he joined in his second term. The caucus – comprised of recently-elected young Democrats – has a mission to educate Congress about issues of importance to millennials, primarily the so-called "gig" or "sharing" economy. Moore's Law continues to hold true, with automation and technology displacing an increasing number of jobs each year. Education must adapt to keep up with technology to train students for the jobs of tomorrow. Further, technology has created more wealth inequality, and the disappearing middle class must be addressed and fixed. All levels of government – local, state, and federal – will need to prepare for the effects of the sharing economy and technology, from self-driving cars, city planning, public transportation, taxation, advertising, charity, healthcare, and workplace changes. Members in attendance will discuss how the job market of today is unlike one any American generation has previously seen, and what role Congress has in it.

Week 3 – Campaign Media and Personal Privacy in the Social Media Age

More so than ever before, a politician's image is carefully formed in the public eye by his or her presentation in the press. From on-camera interviews to editorial boards to debates to campaign commercials, being a master at all angles of communication is key to being a successful elected official. Patrick will discuss his victories and frustrations across three campaigns and time in office. Additionally, one challenge that newly-elected members of Congress have to contend with – that their colleagues just a decade or two ago didn't – is that their whole lives have (likely) been preserved on social media. Every utterance, every picture, and every virtual slip-up could become fodder for political attacks. Patrick will discuss the

intersection between personal privacy, the constituent relationship, and – as a former member of the House Intelligence Committee – how this information could potentially be collected and used.

Week 4 – Washington D.C., Then and Now

While more millennials are being elected to Congress every cycle, it's still a body where seniority is king. Patrick will invite two more senior members – one retired, one still in office – to discuss institutional knowledge, the changes D.C. has seen over the decades, and what younger Representatives have to offer. Patrick and his guests will also address the most dramatic changes that have led to the ultra-partisan environment that is stagnating Washington: the obscene amounts of money in politics, gerrymandering, the influence of a polarized media, and the diminishing interpersonal relationships on the Hill.

Week 5 – Fighting Terrorism and the Evolution of Intelligence Agencies

Every passing day presents new and more concerning threats to the United States. We will debate which threats are the greatest and most pressing, from nuclear (North Korea, Iran, Pakistan, Russia) to cyber to terrorism. Threats constantly evolve, and much has changed with the Trump Administration in charge. We will discuss the best ways to address these threats and rein them in. We will also consider the wars of the last 16 years – of which the millennial generation has had a front-row view – and how our military and intelligence agencies need to adapt. Based on Patrick's travels to Asia and the Middle East and his membership on the House Intelligence Committee, we will talk about the lack of economic opportunity, what can be done to prevent more radicalization, how technology has sped up religious divisions worldwide, and what economic, social, and cultural factors are at the core of the global rise in terror. Finally, Patrick will engage the class to consider the rising threat of cyberterrorism and how to balance the fear of "Big Brother" and government intrusion with what it will take to protect America.

Week 6 – Bridging the Partisan Divide

It's no secret that the country is more polarized than ever, and the situation in Congress is no different. In an effort to reach across the aisle early in his first term, Patrick founded the United Solutions Caucus to gather the freshman members from both parties together and begin fostering a discussion about issues they could find common ground on. Despite the partisan rancor, Patrick maintained many friendships with Republicans during his two terms, and will invite a pair of his former colleagues for a dialogue about what can be done to lessen the hyper-partisan atmosphere.

Week 7 – Life as an Elected Official

Elected to the U.S. Senate from Delaware at age 29, the former Vice President was the same age as Patrick when he first went to Washington. The two of them struck up a friendship during Patrick's two terms in office, with the Vice President serving as a mentor for a fellow young Democrat just beginning to wade the waters of Congress. The two will discuss both the honor of serving in office and the difficulties that come with it. *(Note: May need a larger auditorium for discussion as the Vice President could be a large draw.)*

Week 8 – What's Next for Washington as More Millennials Vote

As millennials begin to vote in larger numbers, Patrick will discuss whether the two-party system might erode, and how we might see further dissolution of party loyalty based on issues like trade, choice, LGBT rights, climate change, globalization, and immigration. It is possible this generation will even circumvent the recent trends of voter suppression by moving toward online voting (perhaps on a smartphone app), as they grew up in an era of instant gratification without walls and with more connections via the internet. How will millennials' news and information intake affect their involvement in politics? Will the previous weeks' topics – an eroding middle class, partisanship, more outside money in campaigns, gerrymandering – be solved or propagated by a new generation of voters, and how will business as usual change in Washington?