The Presidency
53.320-001
Fall 2006

This course examines the central role of the presidency in the U.S. political system. Issues that explore the nature of executive leadership in a constitutional democracy constitute the theoretical focus. Throughout the semester, we will address questions concerning the relationship between presidential authority and public accountability.

Readings and requirements have been selected to encourage comparative analysis (historical and cross-national), enhance the development of critical, analytic skills (written and oral), and facilitate substantial interaction in class discussion. To put to practice the principle of an interactive classroom, we will discuss the nature of this course in greater detail at our first meeting.

I have included additional information on the syllabus. The course requirements, the books ordered, and a schedule of class assignments are listed below. You can also find instructions from the university administration attached.
Requirements and Grades:

Instead of midterm and final exams, this course requires the completion of essays and quizzes throughout the semester. The overall amount of writing is about the same as in a course that requires a midterm and final, but the requirements here encourage you to keep up with the readings throughout the semester and alleviate the need to cram for an exam.

1) **2 analytic essays based on assigned readings (2-3 pages each) 40%**
All essays should be typed (using a twelve-point font and double-spaced.)
Note: The highest possible grade for a paper turned in late will be A- one day late, B+ two days late, etc. You are free to weigh the cost (a lowered grade) and the benefit (additional time). There are no extensions, unless students have a written medical excuse from an appropriate doctor.
Note also: Students need to turn in their papers in class or have them signed and leave them at the Department of Government Office. Please do not submit them electronically or slide them under my office door.

2) **2 quizzes (identifications) 40%**
Note: There are no make-up quizzes, unless students have a written medical excuse from an appropriate doctor.

3) **oral presentation 20%**
Each student will be expected to deliver a 5-10 minute individual presentation. Students can choose from among four topics: 1) presidents and the press; 2) presidents and Congress; 3) presidents and the judiciary; and, 4) presidents and the executive branch. Your individual presentation should address the topic by using the case of a single modern president (post-FDR but not Eisenhower). You might, for example, present research on “President Clinton and the press.” Although you have a great deal of choice, I will make the final decision on the case and topic of your presentation (in order to prevent repetition or duplication). See the schedule of presentations on the following pages, and make sure you can attend class that day. There are no opportunities to make up presentations. Individuals are also required to submit a brief outline (one page or less) and bibliography for their presentation by Sept. 26 and meet with me in advance. *
Finally, I will hand out a brief list of questions that I expect each of you to address. Your final grade will be based on your outline and bibliography, your answers to the assigned questions on the topic, and the overall quality of your presentation.

*Hint: Students who meet with me usually earn a grade of B or better for their presentations. On the other hand, students who fail to meet with me rarely receive B or better. Let me help you by providing some guidance – in person and in my office.

4) **Class participation is required.**
All readings on the syllabus are required unless designated optional. Reading assignments are listed on the date they are due for discussion. Exceptional participation can boost your overall grade. If your grade for participation is higher than your lowest grade (for written work), each will count 10%.
Please note: I will try to respond to your e-mail messages as quickly as possible, but unfortunately it often takes two to three business days for me to read and respond to all my messages. When you send an e-mail message, identify yourself and the course under the subject heading. Also, please try to keep your messages brief by using them to ask a question or set up an appointment to meet with me in my office.

**Final Note:** Please read this syllabus carefully. If you know now that you will be unable to meet any of the requirements, do not take this course. If you are working on a campaign this semester, plan to complete the assigned reading in advance so that you will be able to meet the paper deadlines and perform well on the first quiz. Participation in a campaign is admirable and a valuable learning experience in practical politics, but it is not an excuse for poor academic performance in this course. Also students cannot use laptops in class without my permission, and no food is allowed unless we have a special class event that includes food for everyone.

**Books:**
- Burns, *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* (available on Blackboard).

Most of the readings listed above are available in the campus bookstore and all readings are reserved in the library. Where copyright laws permit, materials are also available electronically. You might also want to purchase Nelson, ed., *The Presidency and the Political System*, because several required readings are in it.

**Assignments:**

Aug. 29: Introduction
Optional reading:

I. **Character and Constitution**

Sept. 5: Barber, *Presidential Character*, chapters 1-4, 6-7.
George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language” (reserved).
**First paper assigned.**

Sept. 12: Barber, chapters 9-11.
*The Federalist*, Essays #68-72 (reserved).
Optional: Essays # 10, 47-52.
**First paper due.**
II. Selection and Election


Film: *Kim Campbell: Through the Looking Glass*.
Outline and bibliography for presentation due.

Oct. 3: Broh, *A Horse of a Different Color*.
Film clips from *Running with Jesse*.

III. The Presidency and other “Institutions”

A. Press and Public

Chapter 11 in Nelson, ed. (reserved).
Presentations: Presidents and the Press.

B. Party and Congress

First Quiz.

Presentations: Presidents and Congress.
C. The Supreme Court


**Presentations: Presidents and the Judiciary.**
**Second paper assigned.**

IV. Authority and Accountability

A. Leadership Style


**Second paper due.**

B. The President as Chief Executive


**Presentations: Presidents and the Executive Branch.**

Nov. 21: No class – Thanksgiving break.

Nov. 28: Draper, “Reagan’s Junta” (reserved).
Film excerpts from *High Crimes and Misdemeanors* and/or *Uncovered: the War on Iraq.*

Dec. 5: Lincoln, Address before the Young Men’s Lyceum (1838) (reserved).
Conclusion.

**Second Quiz.**
Standards for Performance Evaluation:

“Evaluation of a student’s performance in this course as a whole will be guided by the following criteria:

A: demonstration of superior work (written and oral) in fulfillment of course requirements; improvement during the semester will be weighed in evaluation.
B: excellent work (written and oral) in fulfillment of course requirements; improvement during the semester will be weighed in the evaluation.
C: satisfactory work (written and oral) in fulfillment of course requirements.
D: assigned work is not satisfactory or not completed and/or student fails to meet minimum attendance requirements.
E: failure to meet minimum course goals – written assignments, class participation, and other course requirements.”

Statement on Academic Integrity:

“Plagiarism and Academic Honesty. We regard plagiarism – passing off the words or ideas of others as your own – as a very serious matter. We will recognize a plagiarized paper as not fulfilling the assignment and will report such offenses to the Dean of SPA for academic discipline.

Further, we expect students to adhere to the University’s Academic Code of Ethics.”