

The Presidency
POS 4413 Section 1B40
University of Florida – Fall 2013

Instructor: Matthew T. Harrigan
Office: 330 Anderson Hall
Office Hours: T 10:00-11:30, R 11:00-12:30

Classroom: 016 Matherly Hall
Class Period: T 5-6, R 6
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Course Description

This course examines the United States presidency, including its foundations, its evolution and development, and theoretical approaches to analyzing and appraising the highest office in the American political system.

We will discuss the formal and informal sources of presidential power, the politics of presidential elections, the growth of the institution of the presidency, public approval, presidential relations with the media, the legislative presidency and relations with Congress, the politics and process of judicial appointments, and the president's role in both domestic and foreign policy. In examining each of these aspects of the presidency, we will evaluate the predominant approaches to assessing presidential success and failure. The final third of the course will serve as an overview of the modern presidents, as we apply these theories to the men who have served in the Oval Office, from FDR to Obama.

To augment our discussions of presidential powers and relationships, we will pay special attention to current events. Contemporary topics that will likely come up frequently in class discussions will include the 2012 presidential election, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the drone program in the War on Terror, the debt ceiling and “fiscal cliff” debates, the politics of taxes and budgets, health care legislation, immigration reform, gun control, bureaucratic scandals, and any other issues facing the presidency during the semester.

Required Textbooks

- Pika, Joseph A., and John Anthony Maltese. 2013. *The Politics of the Presidency*, Revised 8th Edition. Washington: CQ Press.
- Nelson, Michael. 2010. *The Presidency and the Political System*, 9th Edition. Washington: CQ Press.
- Milkis, Sidney M., and Michael Nelson. 2012. *The American Presidency: Origins & Development, 1776-2011*, 6th Edition. Washington: CQ Press.

New copies of these texts are available at the UF Bookstore in a bundle at 20% off of the individual cover prices. They are also each available on Amazon.com for \$50-60 new, and considerably less for used copies. As a substantial portion of this course involves a discussion of the modern presidents, especially presidents Bush and Obama, I strongly suggest that you stick with the most recent editions of these texts. Older versions will be available for purchase online and on course reserve and may suffice most weeks, but, should you go that route, understand that you will be missing valuable information and analysis of the recent presidencies.

Responsibilities and Grading

The first component of the semester grade is **attendance and participation**. Students are required to be in class for each of our meetings and prepared to discuss the material. As this class meets for an uneven amount of time on Tuesdays and Thursdays, absences will be calculated as follows: Tuesdays (meeting periods 5-6) will be worth 2 meetings and Thursdays (period 6) will be worth 1. Students will be permitted to miss a total of 3 meetings over the course of the semester; each subsequent absence will result in a loss of points from the participation grade. Additionally, participation includes more than simply attending class: students are expected to have read the assigned material and to actively engage in class discussions.

The second component of the final grade is comprised of short in-class **quizzes**. These quizzes will draw directly on the readings for a particular week and will focus on the identification of key terms and concepts. Quizzes are not formally scheduled and may occur unannounced. Missed quizzes may not be made up. As such, each student will be permitted to drop his or her lowest quiz grade from the final average.

There will be **two take-home exams**. Each exam will offer students their choice of two of five questions on a set of readings. Students will be required to write approximately 1000 words on each question and will have approximately four days to complete each exam. The first exam will cover the readings from weeks one through five, and the second exam will cover the readings from weeks six through ten. All exams must be submitted to the Turn-It-In drop box on E-learning. Exams will be graded on three criteria: clarity of the answer/argument, use of evidence and arguments from the assigned readings, and citations/formatting/grammar.

The final component of the course grade is a **paper** of 2500 to 3000 words. Students will be required to compare and contrast two presidencies, evaluating their success and/or failure using the approaches discussed throughout the semester. The final paper must be submitted to the Turn-It-In drop box on E-learning. The paper will be graded on three criteria: clarity of the argument, use of evidence and arguments from the assigned readings and outside research, and citations/formatting/grammar.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Value</u>
Attendance/Participation	10%
Reading Quizzes	10%
Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
Final Paper	<u>30%</u>
	100% total

Grading Scale

A (4.00)	90% to 100%
A- (3.67)	88% to 89.9%
B+ (3.33)	86% to 87.9%
B (3.00)	80% to 85.9%
B- (2.67)	78% to 79.9%
C+ (2.33)	76% to 77.9%
C (2.00)	70% to 75.9%
C- (1.67)	68% to 69.9%
D+ (1.33)	66% to 67.9%
D (1.00)	60% to 65.9%
D- (0.67)	58% to 59.9%
E (0.00)	0% to 57.9%

Grades for individual assignments and overall averages will be posted on E-Learning (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>) throughout the semester.

Due Dates

The dates for quizzes, exams, and the final paper are final, unless modified by the instructor. Late essays will be accepted with a penalty of one letter grade per day. A missed quiz results in a grade of zero, with no exceptions (as we already drop the lowest quiz grade). Individual exceptions or modifications to exam or paper due dates will only be made in the most extenuating circumstances, accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

As a UF student, you have agreed to abide by a [set of regulations](#) spelled out specifically in the University's [Student Honor Code](#). Any evidence of cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment, and an academic dishonesty case report will be filed with the administration. All essays will be checked online for evidence of plagiarism, so be sure to cite all quotations and paraphrasing. For further information, refer to the UF Library's [Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism](#).

Students with Disabilities

In compliance with University of Florida policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability, and I will make whatever accommodations are necessary to assist you. To facilitate this process, students seeking disability accommodations are required to obtain an accommodation letter from the [Disabilities Resource Center](#) in 0001 Reid Hall.

Discrimination and Harassment

Per the [regulations of the University of Florida](#), "The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act.

Course Schedule

This schedule may be altered by the instructor. Readings are listed under the dates on which they will be discussed in class. Assignment due dates are listed in **bold**.

August 22

Course Introduction

Tuesday, August 27: Drop/Add Ends

August 27-29

Bases of Presidential Power

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 1: The Changing Presidency

Tulis (in Nelson), "The Two Constitutional Presidencies"

Ragsdale (in Nelson), "Studying the Presidency: Why Presidents Need Political Scientists"

Recommended for further reading:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 1: The Constitutional Convention

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 2: Creating the Presidency

September 3-5

Presidential Elections

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 2: Election Politics

Pious (in Nelson), "The Presidency and the Nominating Process: Politics and Power"

Edwards (in Nelson), "The Faulty Premises of the Electoral College"

September 10-12

The Public Presidency

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 3: Public Politics

Miroff (in Nelson), "The Presidential Spectacle"

Jacobs (in Nelson), "The Presidency and the Press: The Paradox of the White House Communications War"

Friday, September 13: Last day to withdraw with 25% refund

September 17-19

Presidential Character

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 4: Presidential Character and Performance

Quirk (in Nelson), "Presidential Competence"

Nelson (in Nelson), "The Psychological Presidency"

September 23

Exam 1 due by 5:00pm on E-Learning

September 24-26

The Legislative Presidency

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 5: Legislative Politics

Dickinson (in Nelson), "The President and Congress"

Film: Episode of PBS's *Frontline*, "Cliffhanger"

October 1-3

The Institutional Presidency

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 6: Executive Politics

Burke (in Nelson), "The Institutional Presidency"

Rudalevige (in Nelson), "The Presidency and Unilateral Power: A Taxonomy"

October 8-10

The President and the Judiciary

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 7: Judicial Politics

Yalof (in Nelson), "The Presidency and the Judiciary"

October 15-17

Domestic Policy

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 8: The Politics of Domestic Policy

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 9: The Politics of Economic Policy

Lewis and Moe (in Nelson), "The Presidency and the Bureaucracy: The Levers of Presidential Control"

Film: Episode of PBS's *Frontline*, "Obama's Deal"

Recommended for further reading:

Tichenor (in Nelson), "The Presidency and Interest Groups: Allies, Adversaries, and Policy Leadership"

October 22-24

Foreign Policy

Required readings:

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 10: The Politics of National Security Policy

Polsky (in Nelson), "The Presidency at War: Unchecked Power, Uncertain Leadership"

Film: Episode of PBS's *Frontline*, "The War behind Closed Doors"

October 28

Exam 2 due by 5:00pm on E-Learning

October 29-31

The Modern Presidents: FDR to Eisenhower

Required readings:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency: Franklin D. Roosevelt to Dwight D. Eisenhower

Ferrell, Robert H. 1990. "[Truman's Place in History.](#)" *Reviews in American History* 18(1): 1-9.

McAuliffe, Mary S. 1981. "[Eisenhower, the President.](#)" *Journal of American History* 68(3): 625-632.

Film: Excerpts from PBS's *The American Experience*

November 5-7

The Modern Presidents: Kennedy and Johnson

Required readings:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency: John F. Kennedy to Jimmy Carter

Neustadt, Richard E. 1964. "[Kennedy in the Presidency: A Premature Appraisal.](#)" *Political Science Quarterly* 79(3): 321-334.

Kearns, Doris. 1976. "[Lyndon Johnson's Political Personality.](#)" *Political Science Quarterly* 91(3): 385-409.

Film: Excerpts from PBS's *The American Experience*

November 12-14

The Modern Presidents: Nixon to Carter

Required readings:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency: John F. Kennedy to Jimmy Carter

Wicker, Tom. 1996. [“Richard M. Nixon, 1969-1974.”](#) *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26(Winter): 249-257.

Chambers, John Whiteclay. 1998. [“Jimmy Carter’s Public Policy Ex-Presidency.”](#) *Political Science Quarterly* 113(3): 405-425.

Film: Excerpts from PBS’s *The American Experience*

November 19-21

The Modern Presidents: Reagan to Clinton

Required readings:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power? Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 13: Bill Clinton and the Modern Presidency

White, John Kenneth. 1990. [“How Should Political Science Judge Ronald Reagan?”](#) *Polity* 22(4): 701-715.

Mullins, Kerry, and Aaron Wildavsky. 1992. [“The Procedural Presidency of George Bush.”](#) *Political Science Quarterly* 107(1): 31-62.

Monday, November 25: Last day to withdraw and receive a “W”

November 26

The Modern Presidents: George W. Bush

Required readings:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 14: George W. Bush and Unilateral Presidential Power

Film: Episode of PBS’s *Frontline*, “Cheney’s Law”

November 28: Thanksgiving Day—NO CLASS

December 3

The Modern Presidents: Barack Obama

Required readings:

Milkis and Nelson, Chapter 15: Barack Obama and the Dilemma of Modern Presidential Leadership

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 11: Barack Obama: The Challenges of a Second Term President

Film: Episode of PBS's *Frontline*, "Inside Obama's Presidency"

December 9

Final Paper due by 5:00pm on E-Learning