

PSCI 425
Spring 2019
LWH 4006
M/W 5:40-6:55pm

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Hours: M/W 2:30-5:00pm
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Presidential Power and the Executive Branch

This graduate course explores the power and development of the American presidency and its relationship to other institutions of government. American presidents are at the center of politics, both at home and abroad. But too often our fixation on one individual obscures how other institutions interact with and constrain the presidency. Instead of considering each president as an isolated case, this course analyzes the presidency throughout history, identifying patterns of change as well as continuities in presidential power. We will consider the presidency's design in the Constitution and what has led to departures from that framework.

Texts

I recommend all students familiarize themselves with the historical background of the presidency. A particularly useful text is Sidney Milkis and Michael Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development, 1776-2014* (7th edition, CQ Press).

Required books include:

- Richard E. Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (Free Press)
- Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton* (Belknap Press)
- William G. Howell, *Power Without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action* (Princeton University Press)
- Jeffrey K. Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (Princeton University Press)
- George C. Edwards III, *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit* (Yale University Press)
- Daniel J. Galvin, *Presidential Party Building: Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush* (Princeton University Press)

Course Requirements

1) Complete all readings on schedule. If you miss a class, email me for the next reading assignment, as the schedule may change. Bring the assigned readings with you to class.

2) Attend on time and actively participate in class discussions. In a graduate seminar full participation by all students is central to creating productive discussions, so this makes up a large percentage of your grade. The base participation grade is a B which can rise or fall based on your contributions in class. Those who arrive more than 5 minutes late, or who leave in the middle of class, will be marked for half of an absence. Not being active during class discussions will also result in a lowering of your participation grade. During week 6 of the semester I will

update you as to your current participation grade, so that you will have an opportunity for improvement. Use of electronic devices such as phones or music players during class is prohibited. Laptops/tablets are permitted for note-taking only.

3) Take the final exam. It will be in take-home form.

4) Complete all required writing assignments. **Late papers will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late** (barring serious emergencies, which must be documented). For the purposes of this course, "late" is defined as submitted through D2L after the class starting time on the due date of the assignment. I will not accept submissions via email or in hard copy. Do not wait to the last moment to submit assignments.

All written assignments must be typed in a 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and have page numbers. Papers not meeting these criteria will be penalized.

Writing Assignment #1: You will write 4 essays in response to the assigned class readings. Papers are due on the day of the assigned readings. You may not write more than one per class and you may not submit more than 4 in total. (Cite all your sources appropriately.) Each essay must first briefly summarize the readings assigned for that day's class, and then also answer the questions listed below the readings on the syllabus.

Once you have received a grade on your paper, I will give you the option of revising it, if you wish. All revisions are due within one week of when I return the paper to you.

Writing Assignment #2: You will write a research paper and make an in-class presentation of your findings. No later than **February 6th** you will submit a topic proposal for my approval. This proposal must include your research question, suggested sources for research (not necessarily ones you have already read), as well as potential findings. This assignment is graded Approved/Not Approved. Once your proposal is approved you may proceed with your paper. You may not submit a completed research paper until your proposal has been approved. I am open-minded as to potential topics but will be happy to make suggestions, if you wish.

Your paper must be at least 15 pages and include appropriate references (either footnotes or parenthetical style is acceptable) as well as a bibliography. Your paper must be submitted no later than **April 8th**. You will also have the opportunity, if you wish, to revise your paper after it is returned to you. If you choose to submit a revision you must do so no later than **April 22nd**. Presentations will be scheduled for the end of the semester.

Grading

Work conducted towards the end of the semester will be more heavily weighted in my mind when dispensing final grades; in other words, *improvement counts*.

Participation: 20%
Short essays: 20%
Research paper: 30%

Presentation: 10%
Final: 20%

Incompletes will only be given for valid, documented emergencies.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: Any student found plagiarizing work will receive a grade of **zero** for that assignment and an **F** for the course. You will also be reported to the University for violating the academic integrity policy. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: direct copying of material that is not your own, copying the material even while providing a citation, or copying ideas without proper attribution. **It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism; if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!**

Accessibility

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Student Disability Services at (773) 442-4595, room D-104.

Schedule of Classes and Exams

January 7th and 9th: Introduction - Presidential Power as Seen by the Presidents
Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist* #68, 69, 70

The Pacificus-Helvidius Letters, 1793

Andrew Jackson's Veto Message Regarding the Bank of the United States, July 10, 1832

Abraham Lincoln to Erastus Corning and others, June 12, 1863

Abraham Lincoln to Albert G. Hodges, April 4, 1864

Theodore Roosevelt, "Steward of the People," excerpt from his autobiography

Franklin D. Roosevelt, "First Inaugural Address"

George W. Bush, Address to a Joint Session of Congress, September 20, 2001

Response questions:

1. What is Lincoln's position on the proper use of emergency powers?
2. Compare Lincoln's position to FDR's and George W. Bush's. How do they differ?

January 14th, 16th, 23rd and 28th: The Modern Presidency
(January 21st: No classes – Martin Luther King, Jr. day)

Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*, chapters 1-8

Daniel Galvin and Colleen Shogan, “Presidential Politicization and Centralization Across the Modern-Traditional Divide,” *Polity* 36:3 (April 2004): 477-504.

Jennifer Rose Hopper, “Reexamining the Nineteenth-Century Presidency and Partisan Press: The Case of President Grant and the Whiskey Ring Scandal,” *Social Science History* 42:1 (Spring 2018): 109-133.

Response questions:

1. According to Neustadt, what are the primary characteristics of successful presidents?
2. Do these characteristics apply only to modern presidents or also those of earlier eras?

January 30th, February 4th and 6th: Unilateral Presidential Power
Howell, *Power Without Persuasion*, chapters 1, 3-7

Joshua B. Kennedy, “‘Do This! Do That!’ and Nothing Will Happen”: Executive Orders and Bureaucratic Responsiveness,” *American Politics Research* 43:1 (January 2015): 59-82.

Andrew Rudalevige, “Executive Orders and Presidential Unilateralism,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42:1 (March 2012): 138-160.

Response questions:

1. In what ways does Howell’s theory of presidential action differ from Neustadt’s? Provide specific examples.
2. Compare the arguments made by Kennedy and Rudalevige. Where do they agree, and where do they disagree?

February 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th, 25th, and 27th: The Development of the Presidency – Regimes
Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make*

Response questions (February 11th, 13th or 18th):

1. According to Skowronek, what are the primary characteristics of successful presidents?
2. Do these characteristics apply only to modern presidents or also to those of earlier eras?
3. What other factors besides a president’s personal characteristics matter, according to Skowronek?

Response questions (February 20th, 25th, or 27th):

1. Explain in detail the differences between the 4 types of presidents Skowronek describes.

March 4th, 6th, 11th, and 13th: The Development of the Presidency - Rhetoric
Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency*

Robert P. Saldin, "William McKinley and the Rhetorical Presidency," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 41 (2011): 119-134.

Response questions:

1. According to Tulis, what is "the rhetorical presidency"?
2. How has the rhetorical presidency changed over time, according to Tulis?
3. To what extent does Saldin disagree with Tulis, and why?

(March 18th-24th: Spring Break)

March 25th, 27th, April 1st and 3rd: The Modern Presidency and Rhetoric
Edwards, *On Deaf Ears*, chapters 1-4, 6, 10

Brandon Rottinghaus, "Strategic Leaders: Determining Successful Presidential Opinion Leadership Tactics through Public Appeals," *Political Communication* 26:3 (Jul-Sept 2009): 296-316.

Amnon Cavari, "The Short-Term Effect of Going Public," *Political Research Quarterly* 66:2 (June 2013): 336-351.

Response questions:

1. Can presidents change public sentiments about major issues, and if not, why not?
2. How does this portrayal of presidential rhetoric accord with or differ from Tulis?
3. In what ways do Rottinghaus and Cavari disagree with Edwards, and why?

April 8th, 10th, 15th, and 17th: The Presidency and Political Parties
Galvin, *Presidential Party Building*, chapters 1-4, 6, 8, 10-12

Julia R. Azari and Justin S. Vaughn, "Barack Obama and the Rhetoric of Electoral Logic," *Social Science Quarterly* 95:2 (June 2014): 523-540.

Boris Heersink, "Trump and the Party-in-Organization: Presidential Control of National Party Organizations," *Journal of Politics* 80:4 (October 2018): 1474-1482.

Response questions:

1. What kind of evidence does Galvin use to make his case about presidents as party builders? Do you find this evidence compelling, and why?
2. How does Galvin's examination of the presidency's relationship to political parties change the way we think about the modern presidency?