

POL 320 – AMERICAN PRESIDENCY - 3. 0 credit hours

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

Fall 2010 – MW: 3:00-4:20 A.M. – Graduate Center 2

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Office Hours	MWF 11:05-11:35; MW 2:00-2:45 TH 11:00-noon
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OVERVIEW:

The office of president of the United States has evolved into one of the most powerful and prestigious positions on earth. Yet it was far from clear when the Constitution was adopted that the office would in fact be characterized by such sweep and energy. One of the most contentious issues of the founding debates surrounded the powers of the presidency. While the framers ultimately chose to embrace Alexander Hamilton's notion of a vigorous executive over alternatives (including a three-person presidency and an executive ruling council), they scarcely could have anticipated the dimensions the office would grow to occupy in the centuries that were to follow. Almost certainly they did not envisage the degree to which presidents have become intertwined with public opinion. There was an office to be explicitly "above" politics.

For all of its power and prestige, however, the fundamental constraints placed on modern presidents by the Constitution profoundly limit executive rule. Presidential power further hinges on the actions of other players in the political arena, and changes in society, technology and the nation's values. The struggle to organize the executive branch and provide national leadership in the face of incessant demands for action, while bound by political and constitutional limits, is at the heart of the modern American presidency. This evolving struggle will be the theme around which this course will unfold. In short, we will explore the people, processes and policies of the American presidency. We will consider the executive branch as it reflects each unique president, as well as the ways that common organizational structures and recurrent political processes provide continuity across different administrations.

We are blessed with the opportunity to study the presidency at a moment in history when public interest in the office is high, and expectations extraordinary. It is a moment comparable to that confronting another president from Illinois, who observed:

Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration, will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance, or insignificance, can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass, will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation.

Abraham Lincoln
Annual Message to Congress, December 1862

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to inform students about the workings and nature of the American presidency: its history and evolution, its contemporary structure and functioning, its relations with other major actors in the political drama (organized interests, political parties, the media and the other branches of government) and its policy making process and outcomes. Throughout the course theories of executive action will stand next to examination of actual presidential behavior.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Two midterm examinations, a final examination, a presidential leadership essay, three short presidential simulation papers, a presidential journal, and various assignments as announced in class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Develop students' knowledge and appreciation of the historical evolution of the American presidency as demonstrated by proficiency in fixed-response objective examinations and written work including extended essays.
- Provide students knowledge of some of the range of questions, theoretical approaches, methods and findings of academic research on the presidency, demonstrated by proficiency in fixed-response objective examinations and written work including extended essays.
- Help students develop skills in critical reasoning, reading, analysis, communication and working well with others, demonstrated by proficiency in fixed-response objective examinations and written work including extended essays and through participation in group projects and activities.
- Encourage students to apply the theories and concepts developed in class to the current political environment, as it unfolds in the Fall of 2010, as demonstrated by proficiency in fixed-response objective examinations, written work including extended essays, and participation in class discussions and debates.

GRADING:

Points will be awarded on the following basis:

Assignment	Points
Exam I	25
Exam II	25
Final Exam	25
Presidential Simulation Papers	35
Presidential Leadership Essay	25
Presidential Journal/Portfolio	15
Participation/in-class assignments	10
Optional Assignment	10
TOTAL	160

Grades will be awarded on the following basis:

Grade	Percentage	Points
A	90 +	144 +
B	80 +	128+
C	70 +	112 +
D	60 +	96 +
F	< 60	< 96

Students who have shown improvement over the course of the semester, and those who have participated in class discussions, may be given the benefit of the doubt in borderline cases.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Examinations

There are three examinations scheduled during the course of the semester (two midterms and a final). Exams may consist of a combination of multiple-choice, short answer and essay questions (including take-home components). The material will be drawn directly from the class readings, discussions, lectures and current events pertaining to the presidency as reported in the *New York Times*. Midterm examinations are scheduled for September 22 and October 13. The final exam will be held on Friday, December 17 at 11:00 A.M.

Presidential Leadership Essay

The presidential leadership essay will compare and contrast at least three presidents (such as those covered in *The President as Leader*) in the ways in which they used power and exercised leadership. Your essays should **demonstrate your detailed mastery of these readings and our class discussions**. All essays must be typewritten, double-spaced and should **not exceed six pages**. Essays should be concise, yet as detailed as possible. **Present direct quotations** from the readings where appropriate and **back up your points with evidence, reasoning and examples**. Your essays will be much stronger if you **anticipate and respond to opposing views**. You are encouraged to draw upon resources beyond the class texts. Essays are due in-class, Wednesday, December 8.

Presidential Simulation Papers

Each student will be assigned a role in a simulation of the dynamics of advising the president of the United States. As part of that exercise, each student will write three short papers. The first, worth 10 points, will be an examination of the particular advisory role to which each student is assigned, plus an outline of the relation of that role to the issue(s) to be discussed in the simulation. The second, worth 20 points, will be a detailed analysis of the issues based on discussion with other students playing the same role in the simulation. The third, worth 5 points, will be an evaluation of the final element of the simulation, a meeting of advisors to the President. The first paper should be 5-7 pages in length, the second 8-10, and the third 2-3. Specific role assignments will depend upon the issue with which the simulation deals, and will be announced October 13.

NOTE: *Participation in the simulation sessions is absolutely required. If everyone does not participate, the simulation will not work for anyone. Failure to participate in the simulation will result in grades of zero for all papers. Classroom participation will also be a component of the participation grade for those who have met the simulation requirement.*

Presidency Journal/Portfolio

Portfolios should consist of copies of articles from the *New York Times* relevant to concepts in the readings, lectures and other course activities; and typewritten responses of approximately one to two double-spaced pages to each article. Journals will be evaluated in terms of their ability to **integrate and extend class concepts in depth and detail**. Each portfolio must include at least seven entries. Up to two entries may relate to conversations or experiences students have had relevant to the course materials. Portfolios should be neat and well organized; unprofessional work will be marked lower. Optional assignments are due in class on December 8.

Optional Assignment

Using course materials as a guide, develop a set of criteria that can be used to evaluate presidential effectiveness, or what makes a “good” president. Then choose a 20th century president (other than President Bush) and assess how that president’s performance in office stands up to the criteria that you have identified. Your analysis should be presented with depth and detail. Your case will be strongest if you can anticipate and respond to opposing views, both in the development of evaluative criteria and in their application to the president you choose. Assignments must be typewritten and double-spaced and between 8-12 pages in length. Due: December 8.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:

If you wish to send a message to me personally, *please include a recognizable subject line*. Doing so allows me to instantly recognize your message as important and distinguishes it from the many messages from strange e-mail addresses that arrive on a daily basis, and facilitates a prompt response from me. If you send me an e-mail message and do not receive a prompt response, please do not hesitate to send a follow-up. While I try to answer each e-mail, it can be easy to accidentally overlook any particular message.

A web page has also been set up for this class. Important course information will be posted there along with links to other relevant web sites. The URL is:

<<http://faculty.kutztown.edu/richards/320/320.html>>.

This course will also use Desire2Learn for posting course-related information. A D2L student tutorial is available online at

<http://www.kutztown.edu/academics/lt/ltc/KU_D2L_Student_Orientation/index.html>.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students are responsible for class attendance, and for all materials discussed and assigned during class. There will be no make-up assignments for unexcused absences. Excused absences include but are not limited to illness, scheduled university-related activities, a death in the family, jury duty, and impassable roads.

You must notify the instructor (in person, by phone, or via e-mail) *before* an absence. Excuses must also be submitted to the instructor in writing before make-up assignments will be accepted.

Students who are unable to complete an assignment for legitimate reasons that do not qualify as excused under university guidelines, and who notify the instructor *before* the assignment is due, may, at the discretion of the instructor, turn in late assignments for partial credit.

In addition, at the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to complete a supplemental assignment. Typically, the amount of work involved in supplemental assignments would be disproportionate to the credit that can be earned (these policies are designed to discourage late assignments). If you have any doubt at all about your ability to complete an assignment you should notify the instructor in advance "just in case." Failure to do this will assure that you will not receive credit for missed assignments.

NOTE: *Make-up tests and assignments will not be returned before the end of the semester. Make-up tests and assignments may differ from those given in class in terms of both content and form.*

LATE ASSIGNMENT PENALTIES:

Electronic submission of assignments will not be accepted except at the discretion of the instructor. Assignments turned in on the day they are due but after assignments were collected in class will face a five-percent penalty. Each additional late day will accrue an additional ten percent deduction.

NOTE: *Late assignment penalties also apply where students fail to notify the instructor of an absence *before* an exam or assignment is due.*

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

Students are expected to observe all rules of proper classroom conduct. In order to insure an appropriate environment conducive to learning there are two rules governing behavior in the classroom that you must be aware of:

- Use of electronic devices of any kind is *not* permitted in class. Students with special needs should discuss accommodations with the instructor.

- Please refrain from talking, eating, leaving your cell phone ringer on, or other disruptive activity during class. Even one or two conversations quickly create distractions for other students and your instructor.
- Please do not leave class early. If you must do so, tell your instructor before hand and arrange to sit near the door so your exit will be less noticeable.

Serious violations of these rules may result in a request that the offending individual(s) leave the classroom. Grading penalties (up to a half-letter grade for first-time offenders and a full letter-grade for recidivists) may be imposed at the discretion of the instructor.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC ETHICS AND HONESTY:

If a student has plagiarized or cheated in a course, the instructor may (in consultation with the Department Chairperson and the Dean) impose sanctions upon the student up to and including dismissal from the course with a grade of “F”. The student forfeits all privileges of withdrawal from the course.

Plagiarism is stealing and passing off (the ideas, words, work, themes, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, computer programs or other products of another) as one’s own. In short, it is using a created production without crediting the source. The surest way to avoid plagiarism is to provide proper citation to all works quoted directly or otherwise indirectly borrowed from. Proper citations include the title, date, and author of the work. If you are not familiar with the formatting of bibliographic citations, please consult a writer’s style guide or manual. An excellent online guide to citation can be found on the internet at:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

Guides for citing online materials specifically can be found on the web at:

http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/apa_online.htm

or

<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/cite6.html>

Cheating includes (but is not limited to) an attempt by one or more students to use unauthorized information in the taking of an exam; or knowingly to assist another student in obtaining or using unauthorized materials. Further specific delineation of academically dishonest behavior can be found in *The Key: Student Handbook 2010-2011* (pp. 50-51). If you have any doubts as to whether particular behavior would amount to cheating, please ask the instructor for clarification. Ignorance of the rules is not a valid defense.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

Class meetings will be comprised of introductory and concluding comments from the instructor, lectures, questions, discussions, and activities involving the whole class. For the class to be most successful, each student must come to each class prepared. That involves reading, studying, analyzing and often re-reading and re-analyzing materials *before* class. Much of what is said in the class, both by students and by the instructor, will make little sense to the unprepared student.

You must also try to resist the temptation to discount the comments of your fellow students. The course is designed to give students the opportunity to articulate key concepts and criticisms. Many if not most of the important statements in the class will be made by students. It is essential that you give the utmost respect to your classmates.

Also, keep in mind that in no case should any of the comments in the class be taken or directed personally. A college classroom is perhaps the singular place in our society where people gather for the purpose of giving deliberate and reasoned consideration to a wide range of views, including many of great

controversy. Indeed, I encourage you to present views you may not necessarily agree with in order to explore and develop relevant themes or issues.

TEXTBOOKS:

There are three (3) required textbooks:

Edwards, George C. III and Stephen J. Wayne. *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2006.

Hargrove, Erwin C. *The President as Leader: Appealing to the Better Angels of Our Nature*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1998.

Alter, Jonathan. *The Promise: President Obama, Year One*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010.

Textbooks are available at the KU Bookstore in the David E. McFarland Student Union Building.

Students are also **required** to read the New York Times (“[image edition](#)” available for free online to KU students through Rohrbach Library) for stories pertaining to the presidency.

READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE:

August 30-September 3

INTRODUCTION:
PRESIDENTIAL POWER:
ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION

POL 320 Course Syllabus

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 1, “Presidential Leadership: An Introduction.”

Alter, “Preface.” (pp. viii-xviii).

Alter, “Prologue.”

WEEK TWO:

September 6-10

**LABOR DAY: Monday, September 6
(UNIVERSITY CLOSED)**

Calendar Adjustment Day: Follow Monday Schedule Tuesday, September 7.

PRESIDENTS, PUBLIC OPINION, AND THE MEDIA I

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 4, “The President and the Public.”

WEEK THREE:

September 13-17

PRESIDENTS, PUBLIC OPINION, AND THE MEDIA II

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 5, “The President and the Media.”

Alter, Ch. 16, “The Professor-in-Chief.”

**WEEK FOUR:
September 20-24**

***** EXAM I: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22 *****

**WEEK FIVE:
September 27-October 1**

THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 10, "The President and Congress."
Alter, Ch. 8, "Sea Legs."
Alter, Ch. 22, "The Perfect and the Good."

**WEEK SIX:
October 4-8**

THE PRESIDENT AND THE ECONOMY

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 13, "Budgetary and Economic Policy Making."
Alter, Ch. 11, "The Shovel Brigade."
Alter, Ch. 12, "Larry and Tim."
Alter, Ch. 18, "The Skinny Guy and the Fat Cats."

THE PRESIDENT AND DOMESTIC POLICY

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 12, "Domestic Policy Making."
Alter, Ch. 6, "Instant President."
Alter, Ch. 15, "Tyrannosaurus Rx."

Simulation Role Requests: October 6

**WEEK SEVEN:
October 11-15**

COLUMBUS DAY: Monday, October 11
(Classes do no meet.)

THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN POLICY

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 14, "Foreign and Defense Policy Making."
Alter, Ch. 14, "Global Reset."
Alter, Ch. 20, "Don't Blow It!"
Alter, Ch. 21, "Chaos-istan."

Simulation Role Assignments: October 13

***** EXAM II: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13 *****

**WEEK EIGHT:
October 18-22**

ADVISING THE PRESIDENT

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 6, "The President's Office."
Alter, Ch. 2, "White House-in-Waiting."
Alter, Ch. 4, "The Cabinet Maker."

Alter, Ch. 5, "Picking Hillary."
Alter, Ch. 10, "Rahmbo."

PRESIDENTIAL DECISIONMAKING

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 7, "Presidential Decisionmaking."
Alter, Ch. 7, "Zen Temperment."
Alter, Ch. 13. "The Un-Bubba."

WEEK NINE: October 25-29

*** FIRST SIMULATION PAPER DUE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27 ***
FIRST GROUP MEETING (BY ROLE): WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27

THE PRESIDENT AND THE BUREAUCRACY

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 9, "The President and the Executive Branch."

WEEK TEN: November 1-5

*** SECOND SIMULATION PAPER DUE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3 ***
SECOND GROUP MEETING (ADVISING): WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

WEEK ELEVEN: November 8-12

PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 2, "The Nomination Process."

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 3, "The Presidential Election."

*** THIRD SIMULATION PAPER DUE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10 ***

WEEK TWELVE: November 8-11

THEORIES OF PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP I

Hargrove, Ch. 1, "Power and Purpose in Presidential Leadership."
Hargrove, Ch. 2, "Conceptions of Leadership."
Hargrove, Ch. 3, "Cultural Leadership."

WEEK THIRTEEN: November 22-26

THANKSGIVING RECESS

Begins: Tuesday, November 23 at close of classes
Ends: Monday, November 29 at 8:00 AM

PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

Hargrove, Ch. 4, "Franklin D. Roosevelt."

Hargrove, Ch. 5, "Lyndon B. Johnson."
 Hargrove, Ch. 6, "Ronald Reagan."
 Hargrove, Ch. 7, "Leadership of the Polity."
 Alter, Ch. 19, "Moducs Obama."

**WEEK FOURTEEN:
 November 29-December 3**

THE PRESIDENT AND THE COURTS

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 11, "The President and the Judiciary."
Hamdi v. Rumsfeld (2004) (Abstract at <<http://www.oyez.org/oyez/resource/case/1723/>>)
Rasul v. Bush (2004) (Abstract at: <http://www.oyez.org/oyez/resource/case/1706/abstract>)
Hamdan v. Rumsfeld (2006) (Abstract at: <http://www.oyez.org/oyez/resource/case/2019/>>)

CONCLUSION

Edwards and Wayne, Ch. 15, "Epilogue: The Crisis Presidency."
 Alter, "Epilogue."

**WEEK FIFTEEN:
 December 6-10**

**** PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP ESSAY DUE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 ****
**** PRESIDENTIAL JOURNAL/PORTFOLIO DUE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 ****
**** OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8 ****

**WEEK SIXTEEN:
 December 13-17**

FINALS WEEK

***** FINAL EXAM: 11:00 A.M. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17 *****

PLEASE NOTE: *If a class examination is scheduled or a class assignment due on a day when classes are cancelled, the exam will be given or the assignment will be due on the next day classes do meet.*