

Political Science 4610
UNITED STATES PRESIDENCY
Fall 2017 (24599)
Location: Peabody 115
TTh 2:00-3:15 p.m.

Dr. Jamie L. Carson
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Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the U.S. Presidency through an examination of executive branch politics. It invites students to learn more about the evolution of the presidency, with critical attention given to historical events that have shaped the development of the executive branch. Among the topics to be covered in the course include the role of the president in the U.S. political system, evolution of the executive branch, presidential selection, inter-branch relations, presidential power, and policymaking.

Required Texts

Pika, Joseph A. and John Anthony Maltese. 2018. *The Politics of the Presidency*. Revised Ninth Edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Ceaser, James W., Andrew E. Busch, and John J. Pitney Jr. 2017. *Defying the Odds: The 2016 Elections and American Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Howell, William G. 2013. *Thinking About the Presidency: The Primacy of Power*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

General Expectations

I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. You are expected to attend class regularly, to show up on time, and be prepared to participate in discussions. You are responsible for all material in the readings and lectures, even if you are unable to attend class. It is your responsibility to remain aware of specific deadlines or dates posted on the syllabus and to be sure that assignments are completed on time.

Course Requirements and Grading

Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:

1. Class Attendance and Participation (20%)
2. Writing Assignment (25%)
3. Midterm Exam (25%)
4. Final Exam (30%)

An A will be given to anyone with 94 or more points, an A- to those with 90-93 points, a B+ to those with 87-89 points, a B to those with 84-86 points, a B- to those with 80-83 points, a C+ to those with 77-79 points, a C to those with 73-76 points, a C- to those with 70-72 points, a D to those with 60 to 69 points, and an F to anyone receiving fewer than 60 points in the course.

Class Attendance/Participation

Your grade will be based on class attendance and the quality of your participation in class (see rubric for participation grades below). Students are expected to participate through asking questions and answering inquiries raised in class. Keep in mind that it is difficult to participate without being physically present. To adequately prepare for class, all assigned readings should be completed by the dates indicated on the course schedule. Not all assigned readings may be discussed in class; nonetheless you are responsible for familiarizing yourself with them.

Participation Rubric

A – Student attends every class while consistently demonstrating that he or she has completed and understands the assigned readings by participating in class discussion meaningfully.

B – Student only attends most class meetings while completing all readings and actively participating in a meaningful way.

C – Student has perfect attendance but regularly fails to demonstrate completion of readings or participate in any meaningful way.

D – Student only attends most class meetings and regularly fails to demonstrate completion of readings or participate in any meaningful way.

F – Student regularly arrives late or misses class entirely, does not complete assigned readings, does not engage in class discussion meaningfully, or is disruptive or disrespectful.

Writing Assignment

Everyone will be required to complete a short writing assignment. This assignment will take the form of a “reaction paper” to a scholarly text on the presidency, where you will be asked to respond to several questions. Your completed paper should be approximately 4-5 pages in length in a typed, double-spaced format with one-inch margins. *Keep in mind that your grade on the paper will be penalized if there are grammatical or spelling errors in the completed paper.* Writing assignments turned in after the due date will lose one full letter grade for each day they are late.

Exams

There will be two exams in this course, including a final exam given during the scheduled examination period at the end of the semester. Exams are closed book and may include a mixture of identification, multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions. The final exam is cumulative and will include material covered in the class lectures and the assigned readings since the first day of class.

Miscellaneous

No “extra credit” will be assigned in this course under any circumstances. Keep in mind that final grades may only be changed in the event of a clerical error (e.g., points summed incorrectly). Also, for privacy reasons, information pertaining to course grades cannot be discussed over the telephone or via email. A final grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in this course under extraordinary circumstances and is solely at the discretion of the instructor. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Instructor Availability

If you would like to speak with me outside of class, feel free to stop by my office during scheduled office hours. Occasionally I have meetings during the day and may be unavailable. To ensure that I am in my office on a given day, email me ahead of time to set up a specific time to meet.

Special Needs and Academic Honesty

Students with special needs that require accommodation should notify me and the Office for Disability Services as soon as possible so the appropriate arrangements can be made. All information as well as documentation is considered confidential. All academic work must meet the standards contained in

“A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at: http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm.

Religious Holidays

Students who are absent from academic or social activities because of religious observances will not be penalized. If you desire to be excused from class to observe a religious holiday, plan on notifying me in advance. You are still responsible for any material covered during the excused absence, but will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up any work missed. If an examination is administered during the class at which you are excused for a religious observance, you should make arrangements with me as soon as you can to be examined at an alternate time or be given a comparable assignment.

Course Schedule (Assigned readings are to be completed by the dates listed below)

Week 1 (8/15 and 8/17 – Introduction)

The West Wing – Season 1: “Pilot”

Week 2 (8/22 and 8/24 – Constitutional Foundations)

The West Wing – Season 1: “Let Bartlet Be Bartlet”

Week 3 (8/29 – The Changing Presidency; 8/31 – *No Class, APSA Meeting in San Francisco*)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 1

Week 4 (9/5 and 9/7 – Election Politics I)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 2, pgs. 39-64

The West Wing – Season 2: “The Midterms”

Week 5 (9/12 and 9/14 – Election Politics II)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 2, pgs. 65-91

The West Wing – Season 4: “Game On”

Week 6 (9/19 and 9/21 – The 2016 Presidential Election)

Ceaser, Busch, and Pitney, *Defying the Odds*

Week 7 (9/26 and 9/28 – The Presidency and Public Opinion)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 3, pgs. 101-131

The West Wing – Season 1: “Lies, Damn Lies and Statistics”

Week 8 (10/3 and 10/5 – The President and the Media)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 3, pgs. 131-146

The West Wing – Season 1: “Take Out the Trash Day”

Week 9 (10/10 – **Midterm Exam**; 10/12 – Presidential Accountability)

The West Wing – Season 3: “The U.S. Poet Laureate”

Week 10 (10/17 and 10/19 – Presidential Power and Leadership)

Howell, *Thinking About the Presidency: The Primacy of Power*

Week 11 (10/24 and 10/26 – Legislative Politics)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 5

The West Wing – Season 3: “On the Day Before”

Week 12 (10/31 and 11/2 – Executive Politics)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 6

The West Wing – Season 3: “Documentary Special”

Week 13 (11/7 and 11/9 – Judicial Politics)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 7

The West Wing – Season 5: “The Supremes”

***Writing Assignment Due (11/9)**

Week 14 (11/14 and 11/16 – The Politics of Domestic Policy)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 8

The West Wing – Season 5: “Slow News Day”

Week 15 (11/21 and 11/23 – *No Class, Thanksgiving Break*)

Week 16 (11/28 and 11/30 – The Trump Transition and First One Hundred Days)

Pika and Maltese, Chapter 11

The West Wing – Season 5: “Shutdown”

Week 17 (12/5 – *No Class, Friday Schedule*; 12/7 – **Final Exam**, 3:30-6:30 p.m.)