

**POLS 4610**  
**U.S. Presidency**  
**Fall 2019**

**Instructor**

Dr. Michael S. Lynch  
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 9AM - 11AM and by appointment

**Class Schedule**

Tuesdays and Thursdays  
2:00PM-3:15PM  
Baldwin Hall 102

**Course Description**

This course is intended to provide students with an introduction to the American presidency. We will examine how the president is elected, how the president influences public opinion, how the president competes for power with Congress and the courts, and how the president influences public policy. Emphasis will be placed on the formal powers of the president and on how these powers are brought to bear on contemporary political issues..

**Course Materials**

The following book is recommended for the class. We will not follow the book closely, but will use it occasionally. Many students find it to be a helpful source of background material as well. I will be using the revised eighth edition. The ninth edition will work as well.

Pika, Joseph A. and John Anthony Maltese. *The Politics of the Presidency*.

In addition to the book, you should read the news on a daily basis. The New York Times ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)) and the Washington Post ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)) are two excellent sources of news on politics and government.

Finally, we will also have readings that I will hand out or that can be downloaded from the internet.

**Course Grading**

Your grade in this class will be assigned according to the following:

1. **Class attendance and participation** (10% of final grade): Students are expected to be familiar with assigned readings and should be prepared to intelligently discuss and debate issues from the readings during class. As such, class attendance and participation will be vital to your success in this class. To be awarded full participation points you must attend class, read any assigned materials, and actively engage the class in discussion.

2. **Written Assignments** (40% of final grade): Two written assignments will be due during the term. These assignments are designed to encourage students to engage with the course readings. Each of the two assignments is worth 20% of your grade.

- *Paper 1*: You will complete a paper analyzing a historical election. You will assess why the winning candidate won and why the losing candidate lost. You will consider both underlying public opinion and the campaigns of the candidates. There is a 10-page maximum for this assignment.
- *Paper 2*: You will write a paper examining a campaign promise made by President Obama or President Trump. You will assess what attempts the president has made to implement this promise, what tools or formal powers he has used, what obstacles impeded his success, and how successful he has been in achieving his goal. There is a 10-page maximum for this assignment.

Assignments turned in late will be penalized one letter grade for each day they are late. After one week, late assignments will no longer be accepted. Electronic submissions of assignments will be allowed.

3. **Midterm Exam** (25% of final grade): Please take note of this date and mark it on your calendar now.
4. **Final Exam** (25% of final grade): Please take note of the date for the final exam and mark it on your calendar now.

Missed exams will only be excused for a documented illness (documentation must be provided by a physician) or a death in the family. If you are excused from an exam, I reserve the right to alter the format and substance of the makeup exam (e.g. you may not get the same exam as everyone else).

Course grades will be assigned as follows: 93–100% = A, 90–93% = A-, 87–90% = B+, 83–87% = B, 80–83% = B-, 77–80% = C+, 73–77% = C, 70–73% = C-, 60–70% = D, 0–60% = F.

## Other Issues

1. **Disabilities**: Students with disabilities of any kind are strongly encouraged to tell me at the beginning of the semester, so appropriate accommodations can be made. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the UGA Disabilities Services Office will be accommodated according to university policy. Contact Disabilities Services for more information.
2. **Instructor Availability**: I am available to meet with students by appointment if anyone cannot attend my posted office hours. Please email me to schedule a meeting.
3. **Technology in the Classroom**: Technology, used correctly, has the potential to greatly improve the quality of our lives. Technology, used incorrectly, has the potential

of making the instructor very angry. Cellphones, tablets, laptops, etc. may be used to take notes in class, but not for playing games, checking email, or surfing the internet. Texting is never appropriate in class, unless it is to give your friends updates on the juicy tidbits you are learning about the U.S. presidency. I will understand if you can't wait until after class to share your new knowledge of Ross Perot's 1992 presidential bid or want to text about the failure of the 1868 Andrew Johnson impeachment trial. I would have done the same, if texting had been available when I was in college.

4. **Cheating and Plagiarism:** All course work must meet the standards put forth in the University of Georgia's [Student Honor Code](#). See the [Academic Honesty Policy](#) for details on what is expected of you.

## Tentative Schedule

### Introduction

**August 15**

**Intro and Course Overview**

**August 20**

**Intro Continued**

Klein, Ezra. 2014. ["The Green Lantern Theory of the Presidency, Explained."](#)

[The Obameter](#). *Politifact*.

[The Trump-o-meter](#). *Politifact*.

**August 22**

**Origins**

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 1.

[U.S. Constitution](#)

Federalist Papers [No. 69](#) and [No. 70](#)

**August 27**

**Elections Intro**

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 2.

Abramowitz, Alan. 2008. ["Forecasting the 2008 Presidential Election with the Time-for-Change Model."](#) *PS: Political Science and Politics*.

Abramowitz, Alan. 2016. ["Will time for change mean time for Trump."](#) *PS: Political Science & Politics*.

**August 29**

**APSA Conference – No Class**

**September 3 and 5**

**Elections – Primaries**

Jason S. Byers and Jamie L. Carson. 2017. “What’s Rules Got to Do with It? Parties, Reform, and Selection in the Presidential Nomination Process.”

[The Green Papers](#)

**September 10 and 12**

**Elections – Campaign Strategies and Effects**

Issenberg, Sasha. 2012. *The Victory Lab: the Secret Science of Winning Campaigns*. Chapter 10.

Huber, Gregory A., and Kevin Arceneaux. 2007. “[Identifying the Persuasive Effects of Presidential Advertising.](#)” *American Journal of Political Science*

Collins, Keith and Gabriel J.X. Dance. 2018. “[How Researchers Learned to Use Facebook ‘Likes’ to Sway Your Thinking.](#)” *New York Times*.

**September 17 and 19**

**Presidential Approval**

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 3.

[Gallup Presidential Job Approval Center](#)

Druckman, James N. and Justin W. Holmes. 2004. “[Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval.](#)” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

**September 24**

**Character and Performance**

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 4.

Greenstein, Fred. 2005. “The Person of the President, Leadership and Greatness.” in *The Executive Branch*

**September 26 and October 1**

**Presidential Power**

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 5.

Moe, Terry M, and William G. Howell. 1999. “[Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory.](#)” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

Black et al. 2011. “[Assessing Congressional Responses To Growing Presidential Powers: The Case of Recess Appointments.](#)” *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

Assignment #1 Due September 26.

October 3

Midterm

October 8

Presidential Power

[Trump Presidential Actions.](#)

Mayer, Kenneth R. 1999. “[Executive Orders and Presidential Power.](#)” *Journal of Politics*. 61(2): 445-466.

October 10, 15, and 17

Presidential Lawmaking

[Clinton v. City of New York.](#)

Prokop, Andrew. 2014. “[How Barack Obama is expanding presidential power – and what it means for the future.](#)” *Vox*.

Oleszek, Mark J. and Walter J. Oleszek. 2013. “Congress and President Obama: A Perspective.” In *Rivals for Power: Presidential Congressional Relations*.

Savage, Charlie. 2007. *Takeover: The Return of the Imperial Presidency and Subversion of American Democracy*. Chapters 9 and 10.

October 22 and 24

Executive Politics

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 6.

Rein, Lisa and Andrew Ba Tran. 2017. “[How the Trump era is changing the federal bureaucracy.](#)” *New York Times*.

Lewis, Michael. 2018 *The Fifth Risk*. Selected Chapters.

October 29, 31 and November 5

Judicial Politics

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 7.

Charlie Savage. 2017. “[Trump is rapidly reshaping the judiciary – Here’s how.](#)” *New York Times*.

Anderson, Richard J., David Cottrell, and Charles R. Shipan. 2017. “[The Power to Appoint: Presidential Nominations and Change on the Supreme Court.](#)”

Boyd, Christina L., Michael S. Lynch, and Anthony J. Madonna. 2016. “[Nuclear Fallout: Investigating the Effects of Senate Procedural Reform on Judicial Nominations.](#)” *The Forum*. 13: 623-642.

**November 7 and 12**

**Domestic Policy**

Pika and Maltese. Chapters 8 and 9.

Coleman, Sarah. R. 2018. "A Promise Unfulfilled, An Imperfect Legacy: Obama and Immigration Policy." In *The Presidency of Barack Obama: A First Historical Assessment*.

Additional readings TBA

**November 14 and 19**

**Foreign Policy**

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 10.

Assorted Terror-Related Office of Legal Counsel Memos

Gideon Rose, 2015. "What Obama Gets Right." *Foreign Affairs*.

Bret Stephens, 2015. "What Obama Gets Wrong." *Foreign Affairs*.

**November 21 and 26**

**Assessing the Presidency and Review**

Pika and Maltese Chapter 11.

Howell, William G. and Terry M. Moe. 2016. *Relic: How Our Constitution Undermines Effective Government*. Chapter 4.

Assignment #2 Due December 3.

**November 28**

**Thanksgiving – No Class**

**December 3**

**Review**

**December 12, 3:30PM to 6:30PM**

**Final Exam**