

POLS 4610
U.S. Presidency
Summer 2021

Instructor

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Office Hours: by appointment

Class Schedule

M, T, W, Th, F
9:15AM-11:30AM
Sanford Hall 213

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) and the Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com) are two excellent sources of news on politics and government. There will be a news article assigned for each module that will be the focus of a class discussion.

Finally, we will also have readings that I will email 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** (15% 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 6-8 page 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.
 - *Paper 2*: You will write a 6-8 page 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.

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** (22.5% of final grade): Please take note of this date and mark it on your calendar now.
4. **Final Exam** (22.5% 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

June 11

Introduction

Klein, Ezra. 2014. [“The Green Lantern Theory of the Presidency, Explained.”](#)
[The Obameter](#), [The Trump-o-meter](#), [Biden Promise Tracker](#). *Politifact*.

June 14

Origins and Expectations

[U.S. Constitution](#)

Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*. Chapter 3.
Pika and Maltese. Chapter 1. (recommended)

June 15

Elections

Abramowitz, Alan. [“Forecasting the 2008 Presidential Election with the Time-for-Change Model.”](#) and [“Will Time for Change Mean Time for Trump.”](#)
[538's 2020 Election Forecasts](#)
Pika and Maltese. Chapter 2. (recommended)

June 16

Elections: Campaign Strategies and Effects

Huber, Gregory A., and Kevin Arceneaux. 2007. [“Identifying the Persuasive Effects of Presidential Advertising.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science*
[The Living Room Candidate](#). *Museum of the Moving Image*.
[“How Researchers Learned to Use Facebook ‘Likes’ to Sway Your Thinking.”](#) 2018. *New York Times*.

June 17

Elections: Primaries

Fabrizio, Lee & Associates. 2020. [Post Election Exit Poll Analysis 10 Key Target States](#).

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](#)

June 18

Presidential Approval and Presidential Rhetoric

["How President Trump's Rhetoric Has Affected U.S. Politics"](#) 2021. *National Public Radio*.

Druckman, James N. and Justin W. Holmes. 2004. "Does Presidential Rhetoric Matter? Priming and Presidential Approval." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

[Gallup Presidential Job Approval Center](#)

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 3. (recommended)

June 21

Character and Performance

[Presidential Podcast](#). *Washington Post*

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

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 4. (recommended)

June 22

Unilateral Power

["All of President Biden's Key Executive Orders: In One Chart."](#) 2021. *Marketwatch*

Moe, Terry M, and William G. Howell. 1999. "Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 5. (recommended)

June 23

Unilateral Power Cont. and Midterm Review

Black et al. 2011. "Assessing Congressional Responses To Growing Presidential Powers: The Case of Recess Appointments." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

[National Labor Relations Board v. Noel Canning](#)

June 24

Midterm

June 25

Presidential Policymaking

[Regulatory Rollbacks Have Changed the Nature of Presidential Power.](#) 2020. *Regulatory Review*

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

[Presidential Actions.](#) Whitehouse.gov.

June 28

Presidential War Powers

Writing Assignment 1 Due/Discussions of assignments

Fisher and Adler. 1998. "[War Powers Resolution: Time to Say Goodbye.](#)"

[US Forces Abroad.](#)

[War Powers Resolution Reporting Project.](#)

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 10. (recommended)

June 29

Presidential War Powers Cont.

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

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

[Cheney's Law](#)

June 30

Congress and the President

Infrastructure article TBA.

Ryan, Josh. 2020. "Congress and the Executive in the Age of Trump." In *New Directions in Congressional Politics*.

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 8. (recommended)

July 1

Executive Branch Politics

Weingast, Barry R. 2005. "Caught in the Middle: The President, Congress and the Political Bureaucratic System." In *Institutions of American Democracy: The Executive Branch*.

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

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 6. (recommended)

July 2**The President and the Courts**

Binder, Sarah and Forrest Maltzman. 2016. "Is Advice and Consent Broken?" In *Congress Reconsidered*.

Charlie Savage. 2017. "Trump is Rapidly Reshaping the Judiciary – Here's How." *New York Times*.

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 7. (recommended)

July 6**The President and the Courts Cont.**

Boyd et al. 2016. "Nuclear Fallout: Investigating the Effects of Senate Procedural Reform on Judicial Nominations." *The Forum*. 13: 623-642.

Moraski, Byron J., and Charles R. Shipan. 1999. "The Politics of Supreme Court Nominations: A Theory of Institutional Constraints and Choices." *American Journal of Political Science*. 43: 1069-95.

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 7. (recommended)

July 7**Impeachment and Caught Up**

Kennedy, John. 1955. "Edmund G. Ross." *Profiles in Courage*.

other readings TBA

Writing Assignment 2 Due/Discussion of Assignments

July 8**Assessing Presidential Success and Final Exam Review**

The Trump Presidency Is History. They're Writing the First Draft. *New York Times*.

A Partisan Chasm in Views of Trump's Legacy *Pew Research*.

July 9**Final Exam**