POLS 4610
U.S. Presidency
Summer 2021

Instructor
Dr. Michael S. Lynch
Office: Baldwin Hall 416
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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.


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](https://registrar.uga.edu/student-honor-code). See the [Academic Honesty Policy](https://registrar.uga.edu/student-honor-code) for details on what is expected of you.

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**Tentative Schedule**

**June 11**

**Introduction**


**June 14**

**Origins and Expectations**

*U.S. Constitution*


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**


The Living Room Candidate. *Museum of the Moving Image.*

June 17

Elections: Primaries


The Green Papers

June 18

Presidential Approval and Presidential Rhetoric


Gallup Presidential Job Approval Center

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 3. (recommended)

June 21

Character and Performance

Presidential Podcast. Washington Post


Pika and Maltese. Chapter 4. (recommended)

June 22

Unilateral Power

“All of President Biden’s Key Executive Orders: In One Chart.” 2021. Marketwatch


Pika and Maltese. Chapter 5. (recommended)

June 23

Unilateral Power Cont. and Midterm Review


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


June 28  Presidential War Powers

Writing Assignment 1 Due/Discussions of assignments

US Forces Abroad.
War Powers Resolution Reporting Project.
Pika and Maltese. Chapter 10. (recommended)

June 29  Presidential War Powers Cont.

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

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 6. (recommended)
July 2

The President and the Courts


Pika and Maltese. Chapter 7. (recommended)

July 6

The President and the Courts Cont.


Pika and Maltese. Chapter 7. (recommended)

July 7

Impeachment and Caught Up


other readings TBA

Writing Assignment 2 Due/Discussion of Assignments

July 8

Assessing Presidential Success and Final Exam Review


July 9

Final Exam