

**POLS 4610**  
**U.S. Presidency**  
**Fall 2023**

**Instructor**

Dr. Michael S. Lynch  
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1PM - 3PM and by appointment

**Class Schedule**

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays  
10:20AM-11:10PM  
Baldwin Hall 301

**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 provide via eLC or will be available 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. Any student that misses more than half of class meetings will receive an F for the semester.

2. **Written Assignments** (45% 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, Trump, or Biden. 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** (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 (in no particular order)

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. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>.
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. **Classroom Behavior:** Students should behave professionally throughout the course. Disruptive behavior in discussion sections will not be tolerated. Laptops and other electronic may be used to take notes in class, but not in a way that is disruptive to other students.

UGA is committed to creating a dynamic, diverse, and welcoming learning environment for all students and has a [non-discrimination policy](#) that reflects this philosophy. Our class will respect all students regardless of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status.

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.
5. **FERPA Notice:** The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants students certain information privacy rights. See the registrar's explanation at [reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/](http://reg.uga.edu/general-information/ferpa/).
6. **Mental Health and Wellness Resources:** If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).

If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit [BeWellUGA](#) for a list of free workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.

Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.

7. **Artificial Intelligence-Based Software:** Artificial intelligence-based technologies, such as ChatGPT, must not be used to generate responses for course assignments.

# Tentative Schedule

## Introduction

**August 16 and 18**

**Intro and Course Overview**

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

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

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

[Biden Promise Tracker](#). *Politifact*.

**August 21, 23, and 25**

**Origins and Expectations**

[U.S. Constitution](#)

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

Wehle, Kim. 2019. *How to Read the Constitution and Why*. Chapter 3.

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 1. (recommended)

**August 28, 30, and September 1**

**Elections Intro**

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)

**September 4**

**Labor Day/NO CLASS**

**September 6 and 8**

**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](#)

**September 11, 13, and 15**

**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*.

Bailenson, Jeremy, Shanto Iyengar, Nick Yee, and Nathan Collins. 2009. “Facial Similarity between Candidates and Voters Causes Influence.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72: 935-61.

**September 18, 20, and 22**

**Presidential Approval**

“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)

**September 25, 27, and 29**

**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)

**October 2, 4, and 6**

**Presidential 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)

Assignment #1 Due October 7.

**October 9**

**Midterm**

**October 11 and 13**

**Presidential Power Cont.**

Biden Presidential Actions.

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

**October 16, 18, and 20**

**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*.

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

[West Virginia v. EPA](#)

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

**October 23 and 25**

**Presidential War Powers**

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

[US Forces Abroad.](#)

[War Powers Resolution Reporting Project.](#)

[Cheney's Law](#)

Pika and Maltese. Chapter 10. (recommended)

**October 27**

**Fall Break/NO CLASS**

**October 30, November 1, and 3**

**Congress and the President**

[Infrastructure and/or Build Back Better articles 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)

**November 6, 8, and 10**

**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)

**November 13, 15, and 17**

**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)

**November 20**

**Assignment #2 Meetings**

**November 22 and 24**

**Thanksgiving/NO CLASS**

**November 27, 29, and December 1**

**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)

Assignment #2 Due November 30.

**December 4 and 5            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*.

**December 13 (8:00AM to 11:00AM)**

**Final Exam**