POLS 3316-001: The American Presidency

Dr. Joshua Ozymy
Fall 2011
Class Time: T&TR 9:30-10:45 CI-102
Office Hours: T&TR 11-12:30 and W 2-4:00 in BH 304
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Brief course description:
This course focuses on the American Presidency as an institution and the personalities and important historical situations related to the modern presidents. As such, the course explains why Presidents act in particular ways and attempts to develop and explain generalizations about the Executive office, while placing it in historical context. This is not a course strictly on the peculiarities, personality traits, and personal histories of individual presidents exclusively, but it does undertake historical analysis in order to build context around the evolving institutional presidency.

Format:
Participation is encouraged and expected. The class will be structured around instructor led lectures and substantive student participation

Attendance policy:
You should attend every class. Poor attendance will hurt your participation grade considerably.

Learning outcomes
A. Students will gain an understanding of the historical development of the presidency as an institution
B. Students will grasp the importance of the president and foreign policy
C. Students will comprehend the connection between the presidency and domestic policy
D. Students will understand the interactions between the executive, legislative, judicial, and administrative branches of government

Method of evaluating outcomes:
The instructor will gauge student learning primarily through formal testing via essay exams and a major writing assignment. Formal testing will be supported through a series of less-formal means including: thoughtful reading of the material by students demonstrated by class participation, instructor-student interaction in class, and discussion leader assignments, which will also contribute substantially to each student’s final grade.

Course assignments and grading structure:
10% of course grade: Participation- demonstrated by attendance (randomly taken throughout the semester) and thoughtful class discussion

10% of course grade: Discussion Leader (minor writing assignment)- students will work in pairs and be assigned to 1/2 class session for which they will be responsible for reading the assigned material, turning in a written synopsis of the readings, and presenting a powerpoint lecture on the topic
30% of course grade: Presidential Case Study (major writing assignment)- each student will write a paper representing an in-depth analysis of a president's domestic and foreign policy and how they affected the evolution of the executive office.

30% of course grade: Midterm Exam- The midterm will be inclusive of the material listed on the syllabus (up to March 3).

20% of course grade: Final Exam- The final will cover material from the second half of the semester. It will not be comprehensive.

A= 89.50 or above
B= 79.50 to 89.49
C= 69.50 to 79.49
D= 59.5 to 69.49
F= Below 59.5

Books:


Packet of journal articles and online readings to be distributed the first day of class

Class Schedule: (Readings assigned on first day of class)

Week 1: The Presidency as an institution
Week 2: The evolving powers of the Presidency
Week 3: The personal Presidency and the power of persuasion (public opinion)
Week 4: Presidential elections
Week 5: The President and Congress
Week 6: The President and the Judiciary
Week 7: The President and the Bureaucracy

*Midterm distributed on Tuesday and due in 1 week. *Ten point penalty assessed per day for late exams

Week 8: Presidential scandals and abuse of office
Week 9: American foreign policy

Week 10: Foreign policy continued

Week 11: The modern presidents: Woodrow Wilson

Week 12: Franklin Roosevelt

Week 13: Lyndon Johnson

*Term Paper due on Tuesday. Ten point per day penalty for lateness*

Week 14: Presentations

*Final exam distributed on Tuesday and due in one week. Ten point per day penalty for lateness*

Week 15: Presentations

Week 16: Presentations

**Student Responsibilities:**
TURN OFF CELL PHONES!!!
Pay attention during class. Private conversations, sleeping, and reading non-class related material will not be tolerated.
Learn something! Participate in class discussions.

**Students with Disabilities/Religious Needs:**
If you are a student with a disability or have special needs, please let me know during the first week of class. In addition, students observing religious holidays that conflict with class exams/presentations must let me know during the first week of class.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Driftwood 101.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Academic Honesty:**
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) If unsure of what honesty entails or if for more information regarding the penalties for academic dishonesty, please refer to the University Catalog.

**Academic Advising**
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
Grade Appeal Process

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)

2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.

3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.

4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.

5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.

6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.

7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)

8. Decision by Provost.

9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm.

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.