

Issues and Policies in American Government

GOV 312L 38710

Spring 2013

Instructor: Shannon Bow (O'Brien), Ph.D.
Meeting Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12 pm – 1pm
Location: MEZ 1.306
Office Hours: 3.226 Mezes
Monday, Wednesday: 10:30-11:30am
Monday 3:45-4:45pm
I am also available by appointment.
If class is cancelled/not being held, office hours are cancelled too.

Email: shannonbow@hotmail.com

Be sure to include something about 312 American Government class in the subject line. I am teaching both a 370 and a 312, so it will really help to know which class you are asking about in the email.

Teaching Assistants: Jeff Loeb

Unless your question/problem directly involves my teaching assistant, I expect you to contact them first for any class assistance.

Please routinely check Blackboard for this class. I post Powerpoint slides, notes and information I feel are important to the class. In addition, we will post your grades online.

Course Description:

This course is the second 3 hours for American government. My specialty area is American Presidency. The American Presidency can be taught in a number of ways. This semester, I have selected to teach the class through a historical approach. The presidency has changed in many dramatic and significant ways since its inception. If Barack Obama (with all his presidential powers) were to suddenly be dropped into 1789, the citizens of the day would be shocked at the amount of presidential power he wields. However, as citizens of the 21st century, most do not consider the size and scope of the presidency to be unreasonable. In fact, though some people think he has too much power, many others would be willing to grant him greater authority. In short, what happened was that the office of the presidency acted and reacted to changes in politics and society. This course will start with George Washington and end with Barack Obama. While I will likely touch on every administration, we can break them into specific eras for study. Often changes in the presidency resulted from tumultuous events (e.g., Garfield's assassination helped spur the creation of the civil service system in federal government) which lead to governmental growth. This is not a history course where we will learn in detail about every administration. However, we can use history to better understand why certain eras of presidency are forgettable and others unforgettable. I do not expect you to be well versed on American history (if you are getting worried) because we are looking at how the presidency drives history. The core point of most topics in this class will revolve around: How was the presidency changed? How did the presidency change society? How did the presidency increase or decrease in power?

Required Readings:

The American Presidency: Origins and Development 1776-2011, Sidney M. Milkis and Michael Nelson, 6th edition, CQ Press. (core text) isbn 978-1-60871-281-6

I also reserve the right to assign additional readings from time to time if I feel they are needed. Any additional readings will be added Blackboard and also announced in class.

Grades:

Grades will based on the following:

Test 1	Feb 15 (Friday)	25%
Test 2	March 27 (Wednesday):	30%
Test 3 (final exam)	May 9 (THURSDAY 2-5 pm)	35%
Paper Assignments	(Feb 1, Mar 4):	10%

I also reserve the right to make any changes to the grading system I see fit during the semester. This may include, but is not limited to additional paper assignments (if I determine they are needed), or moving the test dates to accommodate unforeseen circumstances (think hurricanes and natural disasters, not doctor's appointments). I am not requiring attendance this semester, but I reserve the right to start using it if attendance gets extremely low. If I choose to use it, I will announce it in class and post on Blackboard.

Grade Scale:

This semester, the University will begin to utilize a plus/minus system. Here is the scale I will use for the class for grades. Because of the plus/minus system, grades are NOT rounded up or down.

A: 93-100	C: 73-76.99
A-: 90-92.99	C-: 70-72.99
B+: 87-89.99	D+: 67-69.99
B: 83-86.99	D: 63-66.99
B-: 80-82.99	D-: 60-62.99
C+: 77-79.99	F: Less than 60

Paper Assignments

You will have 2 paper assignments. Both are required. They will be on forms that will be handed out and posted on blackboard prior to the due date.

Because of the class size, emailed copies of assignments sent to the professor or the TAs are **NOT** accepted this semester. Contact the professor if you have an emergency (think hospitalization or jail).

Papers are always accepted early if you choose to turn it in. Late papers will be penalized. For every day a paper is late (including weekends), it will be penalized 5% of the total grade a day until 50%. Additional late penalties will not be assessed after 50% though you may be graded lower than 50% for quality. All late papers have to be turned in by the last regularly scheduled class day.

All paper grades can only be questioned or challenged for 2 weeks after the date it is first returned back to the class. If the last assignment is returned with less than 2 weeks of the semester left, then the last day of class is the last day to challenge a paper grade. Only the professor (not the TAs) has the authority to change a paper grade (unless it is a minor or obvious calculation error). If the grade is not questioned or challenged in this time frame, it stands as recorded. This is designed to encourage students to retrieve their papers and also to not question grades in May that were handed back in February because they decide they do not like their final class grade.

Late papers are only accepted until April 29, 2013. No paper assignments will be accepted after that day.

Exams

Three tests will be given. They will be multiple choice. They will cover material presented in lectures and in the readings from the text, as well as any other material assigned/presented in class (including videos if I show any). The final exam is **NOT** cumulative and will only cover material presented since the previous exam. However, most of concepts in this course build upon each other so you will be expected to retain information from earlier portions of the class.

Each exam will be machine graded if multiple choice is used. I will supply the answer sheets for all tests. Students are required to bring a number 2 pencil and picture identification.

The test days are fixed and announced the first day of class. They will not be changed or negotiated. If these test days do not fit your personal schedule, do **NOT** enroll in this course. There are too many students in this course to work with you to make these dates fit vacations, trips, or other such matters. While I will abide by university approved absences and work with students, make up exams will be different than the exam given in class.

I do not return tests in this class though I return Assignments 1, 2. You are **always** welcome to come in any time during the semester to look at your tests (Yes, you can still look at test 1 after the 3rd exam if you wish). The professor will keep the copies of your tests in her office. The teaching assistant will have test information as well. They can go over your scores and what you miss from the testing output we receive from the scantrons. If you plan to attend the teaching assistant's office hours and want to look at your physical test, email the professor and she will place the test in his mailbox. Please try to let the professor know at least a day ahead of time. The teaching assistants have a limited amount of space and I have a large filing cabinet in my office to store the tests. The mailboxes are close to my office so it is relatively simple to drop it off

Paper Assignments

- These papers assignment days are noted on the calendar at the back of this syllabus. They will be passed out and posted to blackboard at least a week prior to their due day.
- You will be expected to fill out the form in its entirety. Incorrect information is always wrong.
- These forms introduce you to aspects of the American presidency. They are in this format this semester to facilitate grading. The course is quite large and the information collected on the forms would mirror what would be expected if you were to research and write a short paper for the course.

Papers will be graded on a 5 point scale (yes I will give quarter and half points). 1 will be the lowest and 5 will be full points.

Academic Dishonesty/Cheating

You will be expected to adhere to the UT Honor Code: *The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.*

Though obvious, cheating is not allowed on any assignments or exams. Cheating involves transmitting or receiving any information from any electronic device, paper, hand signals, or other means of communication during a test. Plagiarism is also prohibited. It refers to copying any work from any source (electronic, paper, etc) without noting/citing where it is originally from. It is important to note that using ideas (and not just quotes) from other sources without proper citation also counts as plagiarism. Any assignments turned in will be assumed to be the final version of the assignment and any inappropriate material will be considered intentional and not accidental.

You will be asked to remove hats and sunglasses while taking an exam. The use of cell phones/wi fi/text messaging/etc is PROHIBITED during lectures and tests. Students will be asked to leave class if they fail to comply with this rule. Furthermore, if a phone(or other communication device) goes off during an exam, we will collect the exam immediately and the student will not be allowed to complete the test. If we discover any student using or receiving messages from any electronic device during the exam, they will automatically fail the exam and be referred to the proper University authorities for cheating. In addition, any student caught cheating in any conventional manner (i.e. using notes, cheat sheets, looking at another student's paper) will also fail and be referred to the proper authorities for cheating. If a student needs to leave an exam for any reason (bathroom, emergency, etc), you will be required to sign out and sign in with the professor/TA. Any student caught cheating/using notes/communicating with others during (or if we later discover) an exam will fail the test and will be reported to the proper authorities.

Students are allowed to use laptops during lectures for **note taking only**. Students who need such electronic devices because of a disability are allowed to use them during the exam in the appropriate centers for disability/modified testing (these students are only allowed to use devices to facilitate learning and are forbidden to use them for scholastic dishonesty). You can contact the office at: <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/contact.php> if you need to talk to them about scheduling tests (but I need to know as well).

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, visit the Student Judicial Services web site <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>.

Blackboard Stuff

I will attempt to use Blackboard as a way to provide information to the class. In the past, I have regularly made RTF versions of my Powerpoint slides available prior to class. However, if I encounter problems utilizing Blackboard, I may shift my materials (including test guides and other things) to another website devoted to making material available to the class. I will announce any changes of this sort to the class.

I will try to post on Blackboard review sheets prior to each exam. These sheets should not be considered the definitive study guide for the test. Rather, they are a list of major concepts and ideas you should definitely know for the exam.

Additional information

Do NOT phone or email us about a grade (i.e. "What did I get?"). We will post grades electronically as soon as practical.

If you need extra time on a test and/or require special physical accommodations, please contact me in confidence as soon as possible at the beginning of the course. Every effort will be made to accommodate your needs within the guidelines set forth by the University.

The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic adjustments for qualified students with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the

Dean of Students at 471-6259 as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. For more information, contact that Office, or TTY at 471-4641.

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Religious Holy Days: By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Emergency Evacuation Policy

In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" written in the subject line.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>

Make-up exams/Excused Absences

Absences on exam days may be excused if the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, or university or legal obligation. Unexcused absences from examinations will result in a score of zero for that exam. If you miss an exam, CONTACT me and explain why you were unable to take an exam.

I **STRONGLY** encourage you not to miss an exam. The make up may be different from the exam given to the rest of the class. It will probably include an essay format, but the exam format is at my discretion.

One more thing: If a true emergency occurs that you know you can document, take care of yourself first and we will sort it out later. You do not need to call us from the ER or jail to let us know you won't be there. In those situations, you have bigger problems than this class at that moment in time.

Class Calendar

The readings for this day are the readings I expect you to have done PRIOR to that day. This calendar is based on my best estimation of how long it will take to go through the material. On occasion through the semester, I *may* get behind a day or two depending on how long it takes to cover the topic. However, I will try to refrain from getting ahead, and tests will ALWAYS only cover the chapters noted in the syllabus.

January 14 Monday	Classes start. Pass out Syllabus and Overview
January 16 Wednesday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency
January 18 Friday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency

January 21 Monday	MLK Holiday – NO CLASS
January 23 Wednesday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency
January 25 Friday	Chapters 1 & 2 Constitution Convention and Creating the Presidency
January 28 Monday	Chapter 3: Implementing the President: George Washington and John Adams
January 30 Wednesday	Chapter 3: Implementing the President: George Washington and John Adams
February 1 Friday	Chapter 3: Implementing the President: George Washington and John Adams ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
February 4 Monday	Chapter 4: The Triumph of Jeffersonianism
February 6 Wednesday	Chapter 4: The Triumph of Jeffersonianism
February 8 Friday	Chapter 5: The Age of Jackson
February 11 Monday	Chapter 5: The Age of Jackson
February 13 Wednesday	Chapter 5: The Age of Jackson
February 15 Friday	TEST ONE (covers Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
February 18 Monday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln
February 20 Wednesday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln
February 22 Friday	Chapter 6: The Presidency of Abraham Lincoln
February 25 Monday	Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power
February 27 Wednesday	Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power
March 1 Friday	Chapter 7: The Reaction Against Presidential Power
March 4 Monday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
March 6 Wednesday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson
March 8 Friday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson
March 11 Monday	Spring Break
March 13 Wednesday	Spring Break
March 15 Friday	Spring Break

March 18 Monday	Chapter 8: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson
March 20 Wednesday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism
March 22 Friday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism
March 25 Monday	Chapter 9: The Triumph of Conservative Republicanism
March 27 Wednesday	Test 2 (Chapter 6, 7, 8, 9)
March 29 Friday	Independent Reading Day
April 1 Monday	Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency: FDR to Eisenhower
April 3 Wednesday	Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency FDR to Eisenhower
April 5 Friday	Chapter 10: The Consolidation of the Modern Presidency FDR to Eisenhower
April 8 Monday	Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter
April 10 Wednesday	Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter
April 12 Friday	Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter
April 15 Monday	Chapter 11: Personalizing the Presidency JFK to Carter
April 17 Wednesday	Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power? Ronald Reagan and GHW Bush
April 19 Friday	Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power? Ronald Reagan and GHW Bush
April 22 Monday	Chapter 12: A Restoration of Presidential Power? Ronald Reagan and GHW Bush
April 24 Wednesday	Chapter 13: Bill Clinton and the Politics of Prosperity
April 26 Friday	Chapter 13: Bill Clinton and the Politics of Prosperity
April 29 Monday	Chapter 14: George W. Bush and Unilateral Presidential Power <i>All Late Assignments are Due by Today – No Exceptions</i>
May 1 Wednesday	Chapter 14: George W. Bush and Unilateral Presidential Power Chapter 15: Barack Obama and the Great Recession
May 3 Friday	Chapter 15: Barack Obama and the Great Recession
May 9 THURSDAY	Final Exam 2-5pm (covers Chapter 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)