Government 330K
The American Presidency

Unique #38779

Professor Bruce Buchanan
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Spring, 2013
T,Th 8-9:30
CLA1.104
Office: BAT 3.122
Office Hours: TH 9:30- 12:30 and by appointment
TA: Samuel West

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

Course Purpose

This course explores the nature of presidential leadership through an examination of the leadership strategies of past presidents and the current incumbent. The goals are to deepen your understanding of how the presidency works and to sharpen your ability to assess the qualifications of candidates and the job performance of presidents.

Course Organization The course is organized into the following three parts and associated lecture topics

A. Development of the Presidency: How and why did presidential power grow? What does presidential history teach the American people to expect of presidents? How does historical precedent affect current presidential performance? What is the nature of presidential leadership?

   1. Introduction: Functions and Values
   2. The Presidency Defined and Launched: Washington
   3. The Presidency Democratized: Jefferson and Jackson
   4. Presidential Morality and Power: Polk and Lincoln
   5. The Presidency Modernized: TR, Wilson, FDR
   6. Why Reputations Change: Truman, Eisenhower, JFK
   7. The Impact of Vietnam and Watergate: Johnson and Nixon
   8. Preliminary Appraisals: From Ford to Bush II
   9. The Lessons of Presidential History

B. Current Presidential Operations: What are the responsibilities of the institution and what resources are available to meet them? What are the "state of the art" strategies for deploying resources to achieve a president's political and policy objectives? How can the quality of a president's performance in office be reasonably measured?

1. Introduction: The Grounds for Judgment
2. The Campaign for Office
3. The Domestic Policy Arena
4. Confronting Congress
5. Media: The Classic Dilemma
6. The Budget and Economic Policy
7. Foreign Policy
8. Presidential Competence and the Public Interest

C. Evaluating Presidential Candidates: What are the grounds for choice among presidential candidates? How important is character, relative to issue positions and track-record, in appraising the qualifications of candidates? How well does the presidential selection system work?

1. Introduction: Five Dimensions of Presidential Leadership
2. Candidate Qualifications
3. Character: Avoiding Troubled Candidates

D. Course Conclusion: The Division of Labor

Student Responsibilities

1. Two short-answer essay mid-term examinations (30% of grade each)
2. Combination take-home final/mini-term paper (40% of grade)
3. Regular attendance (After 2 "free" absences course grade subject to decrease by ½ letter grade—five points--per subsequent absence).

Required Readings

J. Pfiffner (2011) The *Modern Presidency*, 6th ed.
M. Nelson, ed. (2012) *The Evolving Presidency*, 4th ed.
F. Greenstein (2009) *The Presidential difference*, 3d.ed.
Regular J newspaper reading—presidency stories in *New York Times, Washington Post or Wall Street Journal.*

WEEKLY READING AND EXAM SCHEDULE
Complete readings by date indicated

1. By Jan. 17

   P, 1-15
   N, User's Guide; Founding Documents: **1-67**
   G, 1-9

2. By Jan 24

   N, Jefferson through Jackson: 68-**93**
   N, Lincoln through Wilson: 93-**134**

3. By Jan 31

   N, Teapot Dome through Great Society:**135-202**

4. By Feb 7

   N, Gulf of Tonkin through "crisis of confidence" speech **203--252**
   G, 11-109 FDR to Nixon
   P, 230-262 Presidential Greatness and Abuse of Power

5. By Feb 14

   G, 111-218 Ford to Obama

6.

*****FIRST MID-TERM Thursday February 21*****

7. By Feb 28

   G, 219-231 Lessons from the Modern Presidency
   N, Reagan through Bush v. Gore: **253-289**

8. By March 7

N, Terrorism through Obama Health Care: **290-339**
P, 18-53 The President and the Public

Spring Break
March 11-15

9. By March 21

P, 131-180 The President and Congress
Term paper reading

10. By March 28

P, 56-93 White House Staff and Organization
Term paper reading

11. *****SECOND MID-TERM Thursday April 4*****

12. By April 11

P, 97-127 The Cabinet and the Executive Branch
Term paper reading

13. By April 18

P, 186-224 The President and National Security
Term paper reading

14. By April 25

Term paper reading

15. By May 2 (our last class day)

Term paper reading
Discussion of term paper/take-home

Take Home Final/Term Paper Due Thursday May 9 at 3:30 p.m. Location TBA