

University of Georgia  
POLS 4610, Spring 2009  
T/TH, 11:00am-12:15pm  
Baldwin 301

Dr. D. Jason Berggren  
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## **U.S. PRESIDENCY**

### **Course Overview:**

This course is designed to acquaint students with the development and fundamental roles of the U.S. presidency. The primary objectives of this course are to describe, discuss, and examine: (1), the presidential legacy of George W. Bush, (2) the election and presidential prospects of Barack Obama, (3) the success and failure of U.S. senators and governors as presidential candidates, (4) the modern presidential selection and election process and proposals for reform, (5) Joe Biden, the vice-presidential selection process, and the modern expectations of the vice presidency, (6) the presidential appointment power and the politics of recognition, (7) presidential relations with the U.S. Congress, (8) presidential nominations to the U.S. Supreme Court, (9) presidential-congressional war powers, and (10) the concepts of presidential leadership and presidential greatness.

### **Required Texts:**

Ellis, Richard J., and Michael Nelson, eds. *Debating the Presidency: Conflicting Perspectives on the American Executive*. Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2006.

Greenstein, Fred I. *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to George W. Bush*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Jacobson, Gary C. *A Divider, Not a Uniter: George W. Bush and the American People*. New York: Pearson-Longman, 2006.

Landy, Marc, and Sidney M. Milkis. *Presidential Greatness*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000.

Pfiffner, James P. *The Modern Presidency*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Belmont, CA: Thomson, 2008.

### **Other Selected Readings:**

(Some of these will be emailed to you; others will be given as handouts or placed on reserve with department secretary.)

## Course Policies

Students are personally responsible for all assignments. Students are expected to attend each class and to be on time. Attendance will be recorded at each meeting. Regular attendance is critical. If a student is unable to attend class, he/she is responsible for getting assignments and notes from another student. If you know that you will be absent, please inform the instructor beforehand. If you do not know in advance, wait until the next class and discuss the missed class with the professor.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Such changes will be announced in a fair and timely manner.

There are seven ground rules for acceptable classroom behavior:

- 1) Read each assignment prior to the date on which it is scheduled. Please note that not all assigned readings will be discussed in class. Nevertheless, students are responsible for reading them.
- 2) Plan to take all examinations and submit all writing assignments at the scheduled times.
- 3) Be on time. Class shall begin and end promptly. When possible, please inform the professor if you will be arriving late or leaving early. If class is in session, be courteous while leaving or entering the classroom.
- 4) Create an atmosphere of mutual respect. Be respectful to the opinions and beliefs of others. This is extremely important in a political science class!
- 5) The University of Georgia has an honor code. Each student is responsible for knowing it and abiding by it.
- 6) Each student is strongly encouraged to talk with the professor before and after class if he/she is having difficulty with the material or has any questions or concerns regarding the course.
- 7) Keep this syllabus. It's the contract for this course between the students and the instructor.

## Assessment/Grading Criteria

Assessment will be based on the students' mastery of course objectives through the on-time completion of reading and writing assignments, active and thoughtful participation in class activities, and performance on examinations.

The final grade for the course will be cumulative and based on the following distribution:

- (300) - Cumulative Final Examination
- (450) - Three Exams (approx. 150 points each)
- (250) - Class Attendance, Participation, Quizzes, Short Assignments

A = 93-100%	A = 930-1000
A- = 90-92%	A- = 900-929
B+ = 87-89%	B+ = 870-899
B = 83-86%	B = 830-869
B- = 80-82%	B- = 800-829
C+ = 77-79%	C+ = 770-799
C = 73-76%	C = 730-769
C- = 70-72%	C- = 700-729
D = 60-69%	D = 600-699
F = below 60%	F = 599 & below

## Schedule, Agenda, and Assignments

January 8                    **Welcome & Course Overview**

January 13-22            **The Presidency of George W. Bush**

Assignment:            Pfiffner, "The Presidency: Origins and Powers," 1-6; Genovese, "The World's Most Exclusive Club"; Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 159-167 (Renshon).

Assignment:            Pfiffner, "The Presidency: Origins and Powers," 13-18; GW Bush, *A Charge to Keep*, (selected readings); Berggren and Rae, "Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush"; Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, chaps. on George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush.

Assignment: Rae, "GW Bush Presidency in Historical Context"; Jacobson, *A Divider, Not a Uniter*, (selected chapters); Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 167-178 (Skowronek).

January 20                    **The Inauguration of Barack Obama, the 44<sup>th</sup> President**

Assignment: Watch/Read Obama's Inaugural Address

January 27-29,  
February 3-5                **George W. Bush and Barack Obama**

Assignment: Pfiffner, "Presidential Popularity and Reputation," 274-288; Taranto, "How's He Doing?"; Frum, "Bush's Legacy," Rockman, "A Revolutionary Legacy?"; Schlesinger, "Ratings the Presidents"; Tolson, "The 10 Worst Presidents"; Lonnstrom and Kelly, "Ratings the Presidents: A Tracking Study."

February 10                **EXAM 1**

February 12-19            **The Nomination and Election of Barack Obama in Historical Context**

Assignment: Pfiffner, "Origins of the Presidency," 7-11, "The President and the Public," 19-25, 38-45; Berggren, "Two Parties, Two Types of Nominees."

Assignment: Baker, "The Senate Jinx"; Burden, "United States Senators as Presidential Candidates."

February 24-26  
March 3                    **Debating the Presidential Selection and Election Process**

Assignment: Pfiffner, "The President and the Public," 25-38; Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 14-44 (Nelson and Busch; Loomis and Shafer).

- March 5                   **EXAM 2**
- March 10-12           NO CLASS!!! (Spring Break)
- March 17-19           **Heartbeat Away: Joe Biden, Vice Presidential Selection, and Vice Presidential Powers/Responsibilities**
- Assignment:       Nelson, "Choosing the Vice President"; Moore, "Edwards Pick Compares Favorably"; Handout on Vice-Presidential Running Mates.
- Assignment:       Gillon, "Mondale as Vice President"; Moe, "The Making of the Modern Vice Presidency"; Quayle, "Standing Firm: Personal Reflections."
- March 24               **Presidential Politics of Recognition: Appointment Power**
- Assignment:       Pfiffner, "The Cabinet and the Executive Branch", 120-149; Berggren, "Jefferson Davis, Religion, and the Politics of Recognition"; Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 75-91 (Hetherington and Ellis).
- FYI: \*Withdrawal Deadline (March 24)*
- March 26               **"Windows of Opportunity": The President and the Congress**
- Assignment:       Pfiffner, "Public Opinion," 45-57, "The President and Congress," 150-171.
- Three Southern Democratic Presidents: Contrasting Views of Politics and the Congress**
- Assignment:       Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, chaps. on LBJ, Carter, and Clinton; Pfiffner, "Powers of the President," 11-13, 173-176 (LBJ), 179-181 (Carter), 184-188 (Clinton); Edwards, "Reforming the 'President.'"

March 31                    **Making a Legacy: Presidential Nominations to the U.S. Supreme Court**

Assignment:            Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 110-124 (Yalof and Maltese).

April 2                    **EXAM 3**

April 7-9                **Making War and Peace: The President vs. the Congress**

Assignment:            Pfiffner, "The President and National Security," 203-213; Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 92-109 (Kassop and Pious); Baker, "Struggling Wartime Presidents"; Krauthammer, "Medals Don't Make a President"; Ambrose, "The Presidency and Foreign Policy."

Assignment:            Pfiffner, "GW Bush: Two Wars in Two Years," 232-254; Hess, "Presidents and Congressional War Resolutions"; Hetherington and Nelson, "Anatomy of a Rally Effect"; Adler, "Presidential Greatness as an Attribute of Warmaking."

April 14-16            **Presidential Leadership and Presidential Greatness: The Indispensability of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson**

Assignment:            Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 179-190 (Landy); Landy and Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, 1-11 (defining presidential greatness); Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, chap. 1--"6 Qualities of Presidential Leadership."

Assignment:            Pfiffner, "The Presidency: Origins and Powers," 7-11; Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 1-13 (Nichols and Bimes); Greenstein, "Presidential Difference in the Early Republic"; Landy and Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, 12-39 (Case of Washington), 40-79 (Case of Jefferson).

April 21-23

**Presidential Leadership and Presidential Greatness:  
The Modern Presidents**

Assignment:

Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, chaps. on FDR, Truman, JFK, Nixon, Reagan (skim); Landy and Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, 153-232 (skim); Sanchez, "Old Habits Die Hard"; Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, chap. on "Lessons from the Modern Presidency."

April 28-30

**Rethinking Presidential Greatness**

Assignment:

Ellis and Nelson, *Debating the Presidency*, 191-197 (Miroff); Landy and Milkis, *Presidential Greatness*, 114-152 (Case of Lincoln); Genovese, "Presidential Greatness"; Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, chaps. on Eisenhower and Ford.

May 5

**FINAL EXAM (In-Class Exam)**

**Exam will be cumulative.**

**12:00pm – 3:00pm**

*FYI*

*\*Grades Due (May 11)*