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PSC 366.01: American Presidency

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American Presidency
University of Montana
Political Science 366
MWF 1:10 – 2:00; LA 337
Spring 2009

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Office Hours: MWF 11-12

Course Description

This course addresses the constitutional role and historical development of the American Presidency. We will also examine the theoretical explanations of the institution's relationship to democratic government, the separation of powers, and the expansion of national administrative power. This broad understanding of the historical and theoretical presidency will inform our consideration of current events and the 2008 presidential election.

Required Texts and Other Readings

The following book is required and is available at the University Bookstore:

- Sidney Milkis and Michael Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development*, 5th ed., CQ Press, 2008.

Other readings can be accessed on the internet at the addresses listed on this syllabus or will be posted on the course's Blackboard website. Blackboard readings are designated on the syllabus as: "(BB)." Contact me if you are not familiar with Blackboard.

In addition, students are required to read those news stories dealing with the American presidency in a national newspaper such as the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*.

The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or alter course readings as needed.

Requirements and Grading

Exam 1:	20%
Exam 2:	20%
Paper:	20%
Final Exam:	20%
Participation (including debate):	20%

Exams: Exams 1 and 2 will be administered in class on Monday, March 9 and Friday, April 10. The Final Exam will be held on Wednesday, May 13 from 3:10 – 5:10. Exams may include a

combination of multiple choice, identification, short answer, and essay questions. Makeup exams will only be permitted if I have been notified *prior* to the missed exam and only if I agree that the absence was necessitated by a serious, documented emergency. Check your calendar now to make sure you do not have anything that conflicts with the exams.

Paper: Select two memoirs written by administration officials of a modern or contemporary president. Both memoirs must come from the same administration. Your paper should go beyond merely describing the two memoirs. Rather, in a 6 to 8 page, double-spaced paper with 1-inch margins and standard 12 point font, you should offer a critical analysis and comparison of the interpretations and the events themselves. We will discuss this assignment in more detail in class. Papers are due in class on Friday, May 8. Extensions will be available only for illness or serious family circumstance, and then only with *advance* permission. Papers will be marked down half a letter grade for each day they are late.

Participation: Much of our class time will be spent discussing the course readings in a seminar-style. Consequently, both quantity and quality of class participation will be very important. Students are expected to do all of the assigned readings before each class meeting and come to class prepared to discuss the material. Daily attendance will be taken and factored into participation grades. Students missing more than ¼ of our class meetings will not pass the course. In addition, each student will participate in a group-based deliberative, formal, cross-examination policy debate. We will discuss the debates in more detail in class.

Grades: Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

A 93-100	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9	below 60 F
A- 90-92.9	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9	
	B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	D- 60-62.9	

**** All three exams, the paper, and the debate must be completed in order to pass the course.****

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available online at <http://life.umt.edu/SA/documents/fromWeb/StudentConductCode1.pdf>. I take academic honesty very seriously, and will do my utmost to prevent, uncover, and penalize any form of cheating. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about academic honesty.

DSS Students

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations on exams, papers, or other course requirements should contact me as soon as possible, and must contact DSS in order to arrange for and provide me with a letter of approval for accommodations at least one week prior to the first exam. DSS is in Lommasson Center 154.

COURSE SCHEDULE

PART I: CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Week 1, Jan. 26 – 30: Introduction

James W. Ceaser, *Presidential Selection*, Introduction (BB)
Thomas E. Cronin and Michael A. Genovese, *Paradoxes of the American Presidency*,
Chapter 1 (BB)

Week 2, Feb. 2 – 6: The Founding and Constitutional Framework, Part I

Milkis/Nelson, Chapters 1 and 2
The Federalist Papers, Nos. 10 and 51 (1787-8) (BB)

Week 3, Feb. 9 – 13: The Founding and Constitutional Framework, Part II

The Federalist Papers, Nos. 69 and 70 (1787-8) (BB)
Letters of Cato, Nos. 4 and 5 (1787-8) (BB)
Garrett Epps, “The Founders Great Mistake,” *The Atlantic*, Jan. 2009,
<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200901/founders-mistake>

Week 4, Feb. 18 – 20: Debating and Establishing Presidential Powers

Milkis/Nelson, Chapters 3 and 4
Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power*, Chapter 2 (BB)
James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, The Pacificus-Helvidius Letters (1793-4) (BB)
George Washington “Farewell Address” (1796) (BB)
Thomas Jefferson “First Inaugural” (1801) (BB) **CUT NEXT TIME (OVERLAPS WITH
PARTIES; ADD SOMETHING ON LA PURCHASE?)**

PART II: THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRESIDENCY

Week 5: Feb. 23 – 27: The Presidency and Democracy: Jackson and Lincoln

Milkis/Nelson, Chapters 5, 6, and 7
Andrew Jackson, “First Inaugural” (1829) (BB)
Andrew Jackson, “Veto of the Bank Bill” (1832) (BB)
Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address (1865) (BB)

Week 6, Mar. 2 – 6: Crisis and Executive Power

Abraham Lincoln, “Special Message to Congress” (1861) (BB)
Abraham Lincoln, “Letter to Erastus Corning and Others” (1863) (BB)
Ex Parte Milligan (1866) (BB)
Franklin D. Roosevelt, Executive Order 9066 (1942) (BB)
Korematsu v. United States (1944) (BB)
George W. Bush, “Military Order - Detention, Treatment and Trial of Certain Non-
Citizens in the War Against Terrorism,” (2001) (BB)
Eliot A. Cohen, “World War IV,” *Wall Street Journal* (2001),

<http://www.opinionjournal.com/editorial/feature.html?id=95001493>

Alan M. Dershowitz, "Military Justice is to Justice as Military Music is to Music," *Village Voice* (2001), <http://www.villagevoice.com/2001-11-20/news/military-justice-is-to-justice-as-military-music-is-to-music/1>

Week 7, Mar. 9 – 13: Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and the Modern Presidency

****Exam #1: Monday, March 9**** (including everything through last week's readings)

Milkis/Nelson, Chapters 8 and 9

Jeffrey K. Tulis, "The Two Constitutional Presidencies" (BB)

Teddy Roosevelt's and William Howard Taft's theories of Presidential Power (BB)

David K. Nichols, *The Myth of the Modern Presidency*, Introduction (BB)

Week 8, Mar. 16 – 20: Franklin Roosevelt, Liberalism, and "Political Time"

Milkis/Nelson, Chapters 10 and 11

Franklin Roosevelt, "Commonwealth Club Address" (1932) (BB)

Stephen Skowronek, "Presidential Leadership in Political Time" (BB)

Week 9, Mar. 23 – 27: The President as Party Leader and Legislator: LBJ, the Great Society, and Vietnam

Milkis/Nelson, Chapter 12

Lyndon Johnson, "Great Society Speech" (1964) (BB)

Lyndon Johnson, "We Shall Overcome" (1965) (BB)

"Would Kennedy have Pulled Out of Vietnam?," details TBA (BB)

Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*, selections (BB)

Spring Break, Mar. 30 – Apr. 3

Week 10, Apr. 6 – 10: Ronald Reagan and the Presidency in a Conservative Era

****Exam #2: Friday, April 10**** (including this week's readings)

Milkis/Nelson, Chapters 13, 14, and 15

Ronald Reagan, "First Inaugural" (1981) (BB)

Peggy Noonan, *What I Saw at the Revolution: A Political Life in the Reagan Era*, selections (BB)

Sean Wilentz, *The Age of Reagan*, selections (BB)

PART III: TODAY'S PRESIDENCY

Week 11, Apr. 13 – 17: The George W. Bush Presidency, Part I

George W. Bush, "Acceptance Speech," 2000 Republican National Convention (BB)

George W. Bush, "First Inaugural Address" (2001) (BB)

Sidney M. Milkis and Jesse H. Rhodes, "George W. Bush, the Republican Party, and the

‘New’ American Party System,” *Perspectives on Politics* (2007), 461-88 (BB).

Week 12, Apr. 20 – 24: The George W. Bush Presidency, Part II

George W. Bush, “The Bush Doctrine” speech at West Point (2002) (BB)

George W. Bush, “Second Inaugural Address” (2005) (BB)

Tony Blair, “A Battle for Global Values,” *Foreign Affairs*, Jan./Feb. 2007,

<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070101faessay86106/tony-blair/a-battle-for-global-values.html>

George Packer, *The Assassins’ Gate: America in Iraq*, Chapter 1 (BB)

Douglas Feith, *War and Decision*, Chapter 16 (BB)

Week 13, Apr. 27 – May 1: The Barack Obama Candidacy

Barack Obama, “Keynote Address,” 2004 Democratic National Convention (BB)

Andrew Sullivan, “Goodbye to All That: Why Obama Matters,” *The Atlantic*, 2007

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200712/obama>

Barack Obama, “A More Perfect Union,” Philadelphia, March 18, 2008 (BB)

Paul M. Sniderman and Edward H. Stiglitz, “Race and the Moral Character of the Modern American Experience,” *The Forum* 6:4 (2008) (BB)

Week 14, May 4 – 8: The Barack Obama Presidency

Barack Obama, “First Inaugural Address” (2009) (BB)

other readings TBA

****Paper Due: Friday, May 8 in class****

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 13, 3:10 – 5:10