

PLS 3753 - Fall 2015

The Presidency

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Burge
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Class: MWF 11:00 am - 11:50 am in Coleman 2210
Office Hours: MWF 12:00pm - 2:00pm
and by appointment

Textbook

Presidents and the American Presidency by Lori Cox Han and Diane J. Heith ISBN : 978-0-19-538516-8. The book is available through TRS.

Understanding the Presidency by Pfiffner and Davidson. ISBN: 978-0-205-86468-3. This book is available through TRS.

Course Goals & Learning Objectives

While we all may agree that the U.S. presidency is a powerful political position, analyzing the source and nature of that power is challenging, since we often evaluate presidents based on our own partisan or ideological preferences. Also, the unique circumstances of each presidency make generalizations more difficult to confirm. In this class, we focus on objectively analyzing the U.S. presidency. Your grade in this course will reflect your ability to:

- Evaluate and analyze how Presidents shape domestic and global politics.
- Understand and apply social science research methods used by Political Scientists to study the presidency.
- Evaluate and analyze the constitutional and extra-constitutional development of the presidency, the presidential selection process, institutional relations, and the president's policy-making powers.
- Evaluate and analyze the dynamic relations among presidents, the media, and voters.
- Interpret and evaluate scholarly and non-scholarly sources about the presidency.
- Use professional writing and communication skills and APSA citation style.

Course Outline and Grades

The grading breakdown for this course is as follows, I reserve the right to change the grading scheme.

- Three exams (15% each)
- Semester project (30%)
- Critical Analysis (15%)
- Participation (10%)

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported

to the Office of Student Standards.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities- If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

Student Success Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Examination Policy

All examinations must be taken at their scheduled time. Exams will not be given “early” for travel convenience - NO EXCEPTIONS. Make-up exams will be granted at the instructor’s discretion for exceptional circumstances only (e.g., severe illness, family emergency or family death). You must contact me before the next class period following the exam and produce documentation (e.g., a doctor’s excuse, obituary, etc.) of this event. No make-up examination will be given without meeting the above conditions. Study guides will be posted on the class web page prior to each exam to help prepare students.

Class Schedule

Week 1 - Introductions

August 24: Pass out the syllabus/introduce the course

August 26: Read Han & Heith Chapter 1

August 28: Neustadt’s Essay

Week 2 - Presidents and the Constitution

August 31: Read Han & Heith Chapter 2

September 2: Read Readings 6,7,8,9 in Pfiffner and Davidson

September 4: Read “The Imperial Presidency”

Week 3 - Presidents and Communication

September 7: No Class - Labor Day Read

September 9: “An Overlooked Theory on Presidential Politics”

September 11: Read Han & Heith Chapter 4

Week 4 - Presidents and Public Opinion

September 14: Read Han & Heith Chapter 5

September 16: Read Reading 19 from Pfiffner and Davidson

September 18: Read “Presidential Character Revisited” and Take the Myer’s-Briggs test

Week 5 - The Gamble Discussion

September 21: Discuss Your Assigned Reading from *The Gamble* - CRITICAL ANALYSIS DUE BY 10 AM

September 23: Read Reading 16 from Pfiffner and Davidson

September 25: Exam 1

Week 6 - The Nominating Process

September 28: Read Han & Heith Chapter 3

September 30: Read Reading 11 and 12 from Pfiffner and Davidson and Reforming the Nomination Process

October 2: The Nominating Process in the 2008 Election: A Look Inside the Rube Goldberg and The Role of Super Delegates in the 2008 Nominating Process

Week 7 - Money in Politics

October 5: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 3, pgs. 89-102

October 7: Read Obama's Super Pac Hypocrisy and Money Unlimited

October 9: NO CLASS

Week 8 - Presidents and Congress

October 12: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 6, pgs. 201-218

October 14: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 6, pgs. 218-241 and Reading 25 from Pfiffner and Davidson

October 16: No Class - Fall Break - RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE BY 10 AM

Week 9 - Presidents and the Judiciary

October 19: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 7, pgs. 242-263

October 21: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 7, pgs. 263-277 and Reading 27 from Pfiffner and Davidson

October 23: Watch The West Wing - The Supremes

Week 10 - Presidents and the Executive Branch

October 26: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 8, pgs. 278-303

October 28: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 8, pgs. 302-324 and Reading 24 from Pfiffner and Davidson

October 30: EXAM 2

Week 11 - Evaluating the Obama Presidency

November 2: Read Presidential Greatness

November 4: Read Obama, Explained

November 6: Watch - Inside Obama's Presidency

Week 12 - Presidents and Domestic Policy

November 9: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 9, pgs. 325-345

November 11: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 9, pgs. 345-375

November 13: Watch - Obama's Deal

Week 13 - Presidents and Foreign Policy

November 16: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 10, pgs. 376-402

November 18: Read Han & Heith, Chapter 10, pgs. 402-422

November 20: Read Reading 34 and 36 from Pfiffner and Davidson

Week 14 - Presentations

November 30: Paper Presentations

December 2: Paper Presentations

December 4: Paper Presentations

Week 15 - Presentations

December 7: Paper Presentations

December 9: Paper Presentations

December 11: Paper Presentations

December 16: EXAM 3 at 10:15 AM