POLI 5630

Christine Day
University of New Orleans

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POLITICAL SCIENCE 5630: THE U.S. PRESIDENCY

Course Description and Learning Objectives
This course is an overview of the United States presidency: the president’s roles as leader of the nation, head of the executive branch, commander-in-chief of the military, and leader of the party; the nature, development, and sources of presidential power as well as its limitations; the presidential selection process; and interactions of the president with governmental institutions, the public, and the world. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:
- understand the complexity and paradoxical nature of the U.S. presidency;
- describe and evaluate the U.S. presidential election system;
- analyze aspects of the U.S. presidency using political science concepts and methods;
- explore presidency-related controversies from various normative perspectives;
- lead scholarly discussion and present research in scholarly settings.

Course Requirements:
Graduate students will write a major research paper, which will count for 2/3 of the grade; a more complete description of the required research paper is attached. The due date is Monday, December 7. Graduate students have two options for determining the remaining 1/3 of the grade: taking the mid-term and final exams, or writing two review essays on the presidency literature. A description of both options is attached. The due dates for the review essays (option 2) are September 24 and October 27. A brief (1-page outline or paragraph) topic statement for your major research paper is due on September 15.

Important Information
Attendance will be taken daily, and class attendance/ participation may determine borderline grades. Students missing 5 classes in a row will be reported to the Dean of Liberal Arts. Lectures and class discussions may sometimes lag behind the reading assignments; nevertheless, students should keep up with the reading assignments and be prepared to discuss them by the dates they are assigned. Please note that the last day to drop a class is October 14.

All written assignments (except for the research paper topic statement due September 15) must be turned in electronically via turnitin in Moodle, AND in hard copy, by class time on the due dates (and by 4:30 p.m. on December 7). The penalty for late papers and written assignments is 5 points per day.
If a student must miss an exam due to extreme emergency, a makeup exam may be scheduled, but only if the instructor is contacted before the missed exam (if at all possible). Exams may be made up only at the discretion of the instructor.

**Required Texts**
The following books are required and available at the bookstore:


In addition, students are expected to keep up with the news.

**Academic Integrity**
Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Anyone found guilty of academic dishonesty will receive an automatic F and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent through University channels. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. In short, DON’T DO IT! For more information on academic dishonesty and its consequences, please refer to the Student Code of Conduct at this web site: http://studentaffairs.uno.edu. (Or just type “academic integrity” into the UNO web site search engine.)

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to www.ods.uno.edu.

**Calendar and Readings**

**The Nature of the Presidency**
- Aug 25: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 1.
- Aug. 27: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 2; Ellis and Nelson, chapter 5.

**Presidential Elections**
- Sept. 1: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 3.
- Sept. 3: Ellis and Nelson, chapters 2-3.
Presidential Roles and Leadership
Sept. 8: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 4.
Sept. 10: Ellis and Nelson, chapter 12.
Sept. 15: Neustadt and Barber excerpts: available on Moodle. **Topic due today.**
Sept. 17: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 5.

Sept. 17: **MID-TERM EXAM (option 1). ESSAY #1 DUE TODAY (option 2).**

Presidents and Congress
Sept. 29: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 6.
Oct. 6: Ellis and Nelson, chapters 7-8.

The Executive Branch
Oct. 8: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 7.
Oct. 20: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 8.

Presidents and the Judiciary
Oct. 27: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 9. **ESSAY #2 DUE TODAY (option 2).**

The Future of the Presidency
Nov. 3: Cronin and Genovese, chapter 10.
Nov. 5: Ellis and Nelson, chapter 4.
Nov. 10: Ellis and Nelson, chapter 13.

Contending Approaches to the Presidency
Nov. 17: Genovese, chapters 3-4.
Nov. 19: Genovese, chapters 5-6.

Political Scientists Analyze the Obama Presidency

December 1 and 3: Graduate student presentations. Also on December 3, brief review for the final exam.

**FINAL EXAM scheduled for Tuesday, December 8, 3-5 p.m. (option 1)**

**FINAL RESEARCH PAPER due Monday, December 7**
Students receiving graduate credit for this course are required to write a graduate-level research paper, and will present their research to the class. This paper will be worth 2/3 of your grade in the course. The due date for the research paper is Monday, December 7. A brief topic statement is due on September 15. Class presentations will be December 1 and 3.

The paper may be either a quantitative research design or a data analysis paper. Recommended length is approximately 15-25 double-spaced pages typed in standard font. (Don’t forget to number your pages!)

The research paper should include:
- **Introduction** of your topic and research question;
- **Literature review** setting the context for your own study by detailing work and findings on your topic by previous authors (citing at least the most important previous works; if you are doing a research design without data analysis, the literature review should be more extensive);
- **Hypothesis/hypotheses**;
- **Methodology** including the source(s) of data, operationalization of variables, and data analysis techniques;
- **Reporting of findings and interpretation of results** (for data analysis papers);
- **Summary and conclusion** including the contribution of your study and implications for future research.
- **Bibliography** in standard format of your choice. The *APSA Style Manual* is on Moodle and is the recommended format if you don’t already have a favorite.
**OPTION 1:** In-class Midterm and Final Exams (September 24 and December 8).

**OPTION 2:** Choose two of the six sections below, and submit a 4-6 page critical essay for each of the two sections. The essays should briefly summarize and critique the state of the literature on the section topic. The essays need not cover all sources listed under the section heading, and other sources may be included. The first essay is due on September 24; the second is due on October 27.

1. Presidential Power, Leadership, and Success

2. The Institutional Presidency and the Executive Branch


### 3. The Presidency and Separation of Powers


4. The Rhetorical Presidency: Relations with the Public and the Media

5. Presidential Elections

6. Presidents and Foreign Policy