

POS 314
The American Presidency
Fall, 2022
3 credits
MWF 12:20 – 13:10
West CLCC 104

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About the Course

The study of the American presidency focuses on arguably the most powerful political office in the world. Decisions by the American president receive worldwide attention because a president's decisions often impact other societies. This makes the study of the American president both important and exciting. Because the American president receives so much news coverage, most students know a lot about the American presidency before taking this course. Consequently, this course is taught at a more advanced level, the assumption being that students already possess basic knowledge about the presidency.

In class we may discuss and debate many controversial things pertaining to the presidency. However, this can trigger some emotional responses. It must be appreciated that we all come from varied backgrounds that shape our political perspective/partisanship. This allows us to question and debate positions on issues, but we must respect the responsible political views held and expressed by everyone. However, arguments must be rooted in reasoned positions and facts, not on irrational arguments rooted in emotion/closed-minded orthodoxies.

The following course outline may not be rigidly followed because current developments regarding the American presidency may be included in class discussions. Consequently, you will be held accountable for all the material in your textbook on your midterm and final, even if we only cover the most important material from each chapter in class.

During class we will sometimes go over readings from breaking news topics. Some news articles will be only hours old, not years old as is common in textbooks. However, the basics of the American presidency, as covered in textbooks on the presidency, are important, so the basics will be covered, but often in the context of current news topics on the presidency.

Course Objectives

First, this course is designed to help students to learn about the institution and practices of the American presidency. Second, this course is designed to help students to learn to think critically about the American presidency/presidential performance.

Attendance

Regular, responsible attendance is expected and your class participation grade is based in part on your attendance. You cannot participate if you are not in class. Classes should be missed only for very legitimate and compelling reasons. Attendance will be taken during each class. Skipping exams is absolutely forbidden unless a formal written medical excuse is submitted and accepted. Other excuses may be accepted, but you need to inform the instructor in advance.

In-Class Activities

In-class activities will consist of standard lectures combined with short readings and class discussions on topics related to the American presidency. Students will be expected to keep up with the reading assignments, so they can participate meaningfully in class discussions. Participation/class attendance will constitute 10% of a student's final grade in this course.

Academic Honesty Policy

The University reserves the right to penalize any student whose academic conduct at any time is, in its judgment, detrimental to the University. Such conduct shall include cases of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, giving or receiving or offering or soliciting information in examinations, or the use of previously prepared material in examinations or quizzes.

Required Readings

The American Presidency

Duncan Watts, 2009 Edinburgh University Press Ltd, Edinburgh.

(This text is available free-of-charge for download via Proquest at Fletcher Library. If necessary please ask the librarian for assistance in downloading).

The Development of the American Presidency

Richard J. Ellis, 3rd edition. Routledge.

Available in the bookstore and online

Readings from the Internet and other articles

Grading

Mid-term	20 points
Essay	20 points
Presentation	20 points
Final	30 points
<u>Class Participation</u>	<u>10 points</u>
Total	100 points

Grading Scale

A+ 96-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D 60-69
A 93-95	B 83-87	C 73-76	F below 60
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	

Course Outline

Week 1 (8-19)

Introduction to the course: Instructor, students, technology, etc. go over syllabus, questions, etc.

Week 2 (8-22/24/26)

Chapter 1 Watts

Chapter 1 Ellis

Introduction

The varying extent of presidential power

Expectations of the presidency in the 'modern era'

Interpretations of the presidency

An outline of the organization of this study

21st century Presidencies

Week 3 (8-29/31;9-2); Week 4 (9-7/9)

Chapter 2 Watts

Chapter 6 Ellis

The Evolution of the Presidency to 1933

The role of the president as outlined in the Constitution

The Constitution in practice: the early presidents, Washington to Buchanan

From Lincoln to the turn of the century

From Theodore Roosevelt to Hoover

The period reviewed: differing approaches to the Presidency

Week 5 (9-12/14/16); Week 6 (9-19/21/23)

Chapter 3 Watts

Chapter Ellis 3

The Modern Presidency, 1933–2009

The modern presidency

The Roosevelt presidency and its impact

From Truman to Nixon: the development of an imperial Presidency

From the 1970s to the end of the Clinton administration

Week 7 (9-26/28/30) Week 8 (10-3/5/7) (ESSAY DUE 10-7)

Chapter 4 Watts

Chapters 2 & 8 Ellis

Electing and Removing the President

Winning delegates to the convention

Winning support at the national convention

Winning the presidential race

The method of choosing the President assessed

Removing the President

Week 9 (10-12/14)

Chapter 5 Watts

Chapter 4 Ellis

The President and Domestic Policy

The differing roles of the president

Constraints upon the president in domestic policy

Thoughts on the president's power in relation to domestic policy

Week 10 (10-17/19/21); Week 11 (10-24/26/28) (MIDTERM MONDAY, 10-17)

Chapter 6 Watts

Chapter 5 Ellis

The Presidents and Foreign Policy

The Constitution: presidential and congressional roles

Crisis management

Congressional reactions to presidential dominance

The conduct of foreign policy reviewed

Week 12 (10/31 11-2/4); Week 13 (11-7/9)

11-9: 1st Presentation

Chapter 7 Watts

Chapters 9,10 Ellis

Interpreting Presidential Power

The idea of an all-powerful presidency

A broad increase in presidential power since the days of the Founding Fathers

Interpreting the Presidency: the Neustadt analysis

Arthur Schlesinger Jr and the imperial presidency

The imperial presidency reborn?

Recent writings on presidential power

Week 14 (11-14/16/18)

11-18: 2nd Presentation

Chapter 8 Watts

Chapter 11 Ellis

Assessing US Presidents

Scholarly assessments of presidents

General findings in the listed surveys

Difficulties with any system of ranking

Popular assessments of presidents

Scholarly and popular assessments compared

Presidential leadership: 'effectiveness', 'greatness' and 'success'

Week 15 (11-21/23)

11-23: 3rd Presentation

Chapter 9 Watts; Chapter 10 Watts

Support for the President: The Vice President

Support for the President: The Cabinet and the Executive Office of the President

Choice of the vice president

Responsibilities and role

The significance of the office since the 1970s

Week 16 (11-28/30, 12-2)

12-2: 4th Presentation

Chapter 11 Watts

Conclusion: The Presidency and Presidential Power Reviewed

The Constitution in practice

The presidency in the twenty-first century

How presidential power is constrained

Limiting presidential power by constitutional amendment

What else might be done?

Final Exam as per schedule

Addendum

Students that need to be absent from class due to religious observances (ACD 304–04: Accommodations for Religious Practices) or due to participation in university-sanctioned activities (ACD 304–02: Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities) should notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester about the need to be absent from class and make arrangements to make up missed assignments and in-class work.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, and laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal from ASU. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

A student may be found to have engaged in academic dishonesty if, in connection with any academic evaluation or academic or research assignment (including a paid research position), he or she engages in any form of academic deceit, refers to materials/sources or uses devices (e.g., computer disks, audio recorders, camera phones, text messages) not authorized by the instructor for use during the evaluation or assignment; possesses, reviews, buys, sells, obtains, or uses, without appropriate authorization, any materials intended to be used for an evaluation or assignment in advance of its administration; acts as a substitute for another person in any academic evaluation or assignment; uses a substitute in any academic evaluation or assignment; depends on the aid of others, including other students or tutors, in connection with any evaluation or assignment to the extent that the work is not representative of the student's abilities; engages in plagiarism; uses materials from the Internet or any other source without full and appropriate attribution; permits his or her work to be submitted by another person in connection with any academic evaluation or assignment, without authorization; claims credit for or submits work done by another; signs an attendance sheet for another student, allows another student to sign on the student's behalf, or otherwise participates in gaining credit for attendance for oneself or another without actually attending.

Students are not allowed to use online translators or ask tutors to copy-edit their written assignments. Students are encouraged to use good dictionaries, their textbooks, and other reference materials.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. The DRC Tempe office is located on the first floor of the Matthew Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached

at (480) 965-1234 (v) or (480) 965-9000 (TTY). For additional information visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc.

Expected Classroom Behavior

Be sure to arrive on time for class. Excessive tardiness will be subject to sanctions. Any disruptive behavior, which includes ringing cell phones, listening to your mp3/iPod player, text messaging, constant talking, eating food noisily, reading a newspaper, will not be tolerated. The use of laptops (unless for note taking), cell phones, MP3, IPOD, etc. are strictly prohibited during class. If an online or hybrid course, include a statement such as: Netiquette is defined as appropriate online behavior. For this course, netiquette includes keeping course discussion posts focused on the assigned topics, maintaining a positive and polite atmosphere, and using tact in expressing differences of opinion. Inappropriate discussion posts may be deleted by the instructor.

If students are asked to participate in a synchronous meeting via a video conferencing application, students are expected to use their web cameras so they can be seen. Students should ensure that background noises and distractions are removed (food, TVs, music, other people in the room). Students should dress appropriately for this academic meeting. They should remember that any inappropriate distracting behavior via a virtual meeting will be dealt with in the same manner as in the physical classroom.

Policy Against Threatening Behavior

All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on or off campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances.

Reporting Title IX Violations

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the

basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

Policy on Sexual Discrimination

Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information.

Copyrighted Materials

All content in this course, including video lectures/meetings, presentations, assignments, discussions, quizzes, and exams is protected by copyright and may not be shared, uploaded, sold, or distributed.

Students must refrain from uploading or submitting material that is not the student's original work to any website, course shell, or discussion used in this course or any other course unless the students first comply with all applicable copyright laws. Instructors reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement. Any recording of class sessions by students is prohibited, except as part of an accommodation approved by the Disability Resource Center.

Syllabus Disclaimer

The syllabus is a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the instructor and the student. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. Please remember to check your ASU email and the course site often.