

American Presidency
University of Montana
Political Science 346
Tu/Th 9:30 – 10:50; Fine Arts 302
Spring 2020

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Office: Liberal Arts 354
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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 ongoing 2020 presidential selection process.

Course Materials

The following book is required: Sidney Milkis and Michael Nelson, *The American Presidency: Origins and Development*, 8th ed. (Sage, 2018). Students may use earlier editions (I will discuss this in class).

Other materials can be accessed on the course's Moodle website or will be distributed via email. The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or alter course readings as needed.

Requirements and Grading

Midterm Exam (Mar. 12):	30%
Paper (April 23):	30%
Final Exam (May 7):	30%
Participation (including debate):	10%

Exams: The Midterm Exam will be administered in class on Thursday, March 12. The Final Exam will be held on Thursday, May 7 from 8:00 – 10:00. 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. Add these dates to your calendar now to avoid scheduling anything that conflicts with the exams.

Paper: Students will write a 4-5 page double-spaced paper with 1-inch margins and standard 12 point font. More information about the paper will be provided in class. Papers are due via Moodle at 9:30 AM on Thursday, April 23. Extensions will only be granted if I have been notified *prior* to the due date and only if I agree that an extension is warranted due to a serious, documented emergency. 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 course material. 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 1/4 of our class meetings will not pass the course.*

- *Debate*: Each student will participate in a formal group-based, 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	F 0-59.9
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	

*****Students must complete both exams and the paper to pass the course.*****

PSCI 400 Writing Project

All Political Science majors are required to take PSCI 400, Advanced Writing in Political Science (1 credit) in conjunction with an upper-level PSCI course prior to graduation. Students may choose to do so as part of this course. *This opportunity is strictly optional and has absolutely no influence on your performance in, or grade for, the larger course.* Students wishing to enroll in this co-requisite option must meet with the instructor prior to starting their project to discuss its aim, scope, sources, and style. Such a meeting should occur in the first few weeks of the semester.

Graduate Increment

Graduate students will meet with the instructor early in the semester to discuss the course's graduate increment. Graduate students are required to develop and carry out an independent research project under the guidance of the instructor that yields a 10-15 page paper.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct will be subject to an academic penalty including failing the course and a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#). 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.

Accessibility

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). The University does not permit fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications, however, if you have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance and you wish to request accommodations for this course, please register with DSS by contacting them in Lommasson Center 154 or at (406) 243-2243. Students requesting accommodations on exams, papers, or other course requirements must contact DSS in order to arrange for and provide the instructor with a letter of approval for accommodations at least one week prior to the necessary accommodation (e.g., one week prior to the Midterm Exam).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Jan. 14 & 16: Introduction

Week 2, Jan. 21 & 23: Impeachment

Week 3, Jan. 28 & 30: The Founding and Constitutional Framework, Part I

Week 4, Feb. 4 & 6: The Founding and Constitutional Framework, Part II

Week 5, Feb. 11 & 13: From Theory to Practice: Bringing the Presidency to Life

Week 6, Feb. 18 & 20: The Age of Jackson

Week 7, Feb. 25 & 27: Lincoln and a New Birth of Freedom

Week 8, Mar. 3 & 5: Progressive Politics and Executive Power: TR and Wilson

Week 9, Mar. 10 & 12: The Modern Presidency: FDR, Truman, and Ike

Week 10, Mar. 17 & 19: Spring Break

Week 11, Mar. 24 & 26: The Limits of Presidential Power: Kennedy, LBJ, and Nixon

Week 12, Mar. 31 & Apr. 2: Morning in America? Reagan and Bush 41

Week 13, Apr. 7 & 9: The Third Way & Compassionate Conservatism: Clinton & Bush 43

Week 14, Apr. 14 & 16: Hope and Change?

Week 15, Apr. 21 & 23: Making America Great Again?

Week 16, Apr. 28 & 30: Conclusion

Final Exam: Thursday, May 7 from 8:00 – 10:00