



Course Syllabus: The Presidency

POLS 3843-201

Spring 2022

MWF 10:00am-10:50am

PY 209

Contact Information

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesday: 11:00am-12:00pm

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Course Description

With a focus on the skills of political leadership, this class introduces undergraduates to the institution of the U.S. presidency. It describes the origins and development of the presidency, analyzes the president's relations with other government elites, and explains how presidents formulate and implement domestic, economic, and national security policies. In addition, we will discuss the role the media plays in presidential politics and how that role has changed over time.

Textbooks

The Politics of the Presidency. 10th Edition. Joseph A. Pika, John Anthony Maltese and Andrew Rudalevige.

Course Website

The course will use a D2L page as a place to obtain copies of the syllabus, and any other course documents that may be posted. You will also use the dropbox in D2L to turn in some of your assignments.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2018-19](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty is cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading

Each exam will count for 15% of your final grade. Your weekly reflections will be averaged and the final average will make up another 10% of your final grade. Your participation in the election simulation will make up 25% of your final grade. Your research paper will make up the final 20% of your overall grade.

Table 1: Grade Scheme

Cut Off	Grade
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
Less than 60%	F

Student Responsibilities

Readings

The readings serve as a point of departure for lectures and discussions. Therefore, it is imperative that each student completes the assigned reading before a topic is taken up in class. Remember, the readings are a point of departure from class lectures. You will be held accountable not only for my discussion in lecture, but also for anything in the textbooks that may not be covered in lecture or discussion.

Attendance

This course has been planned as a fully face-to-face course. Per state mandates, mask use and social distancing is not currently required for classrooms. However, face mask use is welcome and encouraged by me as the instructor, in accordance with CDC guidelines, Section 3, found here [CDC Guidelines for Higher Education](#). In the event of increased incidence of COVID-19 active cases that results in MSU moving back to protective measures, I will notify you through an announcement on D2L. As the course instructor of record, I reserve the right to move the course online, either partially, or in full, in the event of a personal emergency that prohibits me from delivering the course fully in-person. More instructions will be given at that time.

Class attendance is strongly encouraged. It has been my experience that those who do not attend class tend to have a difficult time with the course and generally receive lower grades.

During the simulation, I will take attendance, and attendance will be considered when evaluating your participation.

Election Simulation

Students will participate in a semester long project where they participate in an election either as members of a political party organization, or as individuals

operating in the political environment outside the party structure. Students can be candidates, political party chairs, campaign managers, interest groups, think tanks, media correspondents, or pollsters. Grades for the simulation are based on participation and completing the assignments required for each role. The simulation will last throughout the entire semester and will end with an election on April 29, 2022. Further details will be provided in a handout. In my office is an envelope with a twenty dollar bill in it. The first student to come to my office, during office hours, and say big gulps huh, alright, well see ya later, and tell me what movie the line is from, will get it.

Weekly Reflections

Presidential politics is partly a function of the political environment, and this environment is constantly changing. Therefore, it is important to continually apply the theories we learn in class to what is happening in and around the Oval Office. For a portion of the semester, students will be required to turn in a one-page, single-spaced reflection on D2L doing just that. Papers will be due in D2L by 5:00pm on Fridays. Students will choose one article (including editorials) per week from a reputable, either print or online, national news source, and discuss how it directly speaks to a concept we discussed in class during the week. Each paper must directly cite course material and how it relates to the article. Therefore, you must include in-text citations and a reference page with your paper. Late papers will not be accepted.

Acceptable examples are:

New York Times
Washington Post
Wall Street Journal
Monkey Cage
Real Clear Politics
Five Thirty Eight

Unacceptable examples are:

Partisan news (like Mother Jones, National Review)
The Onion
People Magazine (or similar)
Facebook
Video editorial found on YouTube
Vox

Research Paper

The research assignment is designed to allow students to investigate a particular presidency and analyze it using the theories covered in class. Students should select a presidency and have it approved by the instructor. After selecting a presidency the students should fully research the presidency and then write a research paper that contains two sections. Section one should present a narrative history of the presidency describing the background of the president, his election(s), the major conflicts during his presidency, his major policy accomplishments, the state of Congress during his presidency (and whether or not that evolved over the course of his term(s)), and ultimately the legacy of his presidency. Section two should analyze the presidency using the theoretical propositions students gained from class. This section should discuss those theories that students think best explain their president. Papers should be no less than 15 pages (reference page and title page do not count towards page total). You will turn the papers in through a dropbox in the course D2L page.

Papers are due by noon on April 25, 2022. You will present your research orally, in class, the last week of the semester.

Writing Rubric

For all writing assignments, the following rubric will be used for evaluation:

100-90% – The assignment is thoughtful, concise (but thorough), well-articulated and well-developed. Student demonstrates advanced understanding of the topic and raises interesting questions and/or observations about the material. There are few, if any, stylistic or grammatical writing errors.

89-80% – Good points are made about the material, but the discussion falls short of the thoughtfulness and insight described above. The essay is well articulated and concise, but not particularly insightful. There are a number of stylistic or grammatical writing errors.

79-70% – An attempt is made at the material, but the student does not demonstrate a solid grasp of the main points of the material, nor does he or she raise any particularly interesting questions. There are several stylistic or grammatical writing errors.

69-60 % – This is a poor assignment on the whole. While the student attempted to address the assignment, the work is choppy, disorganized and largely irrelevant to advancing understanding of the topic. Stylistic and grammatical writing errors occur throughout.

Below 60% - The student did not follow directions, the writing is unintelligible, the paper is riddled with stylistic and/or grammatical errors, and/or page number guidelines were not met.

0% - There is plagiarism involved.

I encourage all students to visit the *Writing Center* for tips and assistance with all written class assignments. Likewise, I am pleased to provide help to you throughout the term.

Required Examinations

There will be three required examinations. The scheduled examination dates are as follows (these will not change):

Exam 1: February 11, 2022

Exam 2: March 7, 2022

Final Exam: May 4, 2022: 10:30am-12:30pm

If you arrive more than 15 minutes late for any exam, you will not be allowed to take the exam. In these cases you will be given a grade of zero.

Basic Policies

Make-up Policy

If a student has a University-approved excuse and if the instructor is notified in writing, prior to the examination or assignment, and the student can provide official documentation to validate the excuse, arrangements for a make-up may be made. If a student fails to do any of these things, the student will receive a zero for the exam or assignment. Official documentation does not include a letter from the Dean of Students Office. You must provide me with actual documentation that validates the excuse and clearly demonstrates that you were unable to complete the assignment (or exam) by the due date. If a student fails to notify the instructor, or provide the proper documentation, the student will receive a zero for the assignment (or exam). For COVID related illnesses, I will be notified by the university that you must be quarantined or self-isolated. In that instance you will be excused for the period that the notification specifies. But will be required to make-up missed work.

Exams, Assignments, and Grading

I will only discuss a grade with you in my office. I will not discuss a grade with you before or after class in the classroom, in the hallway, outside by my car, via e-mail or over the phone. I want you to take time to look over your exam thoroughly before you make an argument for a different grade. Any discussion of exam grades should take place within my office hours or by appointment in my office if you are not able to attend the scheduled office hours. If you feel that you and another student provided similar or equal answers to an exam question and you received a lower grade on that question, then both students must come to the assigned office hours with their exams in order for me to evaluate the answers equally and fairly. Keep in mind that in some cases I may lower the grade of the other student and not raise yours after reviewing both answers, if I feel that the situation deems it necessary.

Taking Exams Early

Only under extraordinary circumstances will a student be allowed to take an exam early. Only university approved excuses, death in the family, illness, etc. will be considered for taking an exam early.

Wikipedia

At no time will a student be allowed to use Wikipedia as a source for any project or paper in my class. If it is determined that Wikipedia was used as a source for a project or paper, the student will be given a grade of zero automatically.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any form is unacceptable. Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor.

In all of your assignments, including your homework or drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution. "Proper attribution" means that you have fully identified the original source and extent of your use of the words or ideas of others that you reproduce in your work for this course, usually in the form of a footnote or parenthesis.

As a general rule, if you are citing from a published source or from a web site and the quotation is short (up to a sentence or two) place it in quotation marks; if you employ a longer passage from a publication or web site, please indent it and use single spacing. In both cases, be sure to cite the original source in a footnote or in parentheses.

This is not limited to direct quotations. Any time you use material from a published source, whether quoting directly, borrowing from it, or paraphrasing, you can only do so with proper attribution.

If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from me.

Finally, you should keep in mind that as a member of the campus community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors and will be evaluated on your own merits. So be proud of your academic accomplishments and help to protect and promote academic integrity at MSU. The consequences of cheating and academic dishonesty – including a formal discipline file, possible loss of future internship, scholarship, or employment opportunities, and denial of admission to graduate school – are simply not worth it.

Any paper or assignment that is found to be plagiarized will be given a grade of zero and will be reported through the proper channels according to the guidelines provided in the MSU Student Handbook.

Late Assignments

I do not accept late assignments, papers, exams, quizzes, or anything else. If it is late, it will receive a grade of zero. If you miss an assignment because you arrive to class late, you will receive a grade of zero on that assignment.

Cellphones

These should be turned off when entering the classroom, unless prior arrangements have been made with me concerning a family emergency. At no time will you be allowed to look at your cellphone during an exam or quiz. If you are observed looking at your cellphone once an exam or quiz has been handed to you, you will automatically receive a grade of zero for that exam or quiz.

General Behavior

Students are expected to act like responsible adults. There should be no talking while I am lecturing or while another student is answering a question or sharing

their opinion on the subject matter of the class. If this occurs, students will be warned and if the disruptive behavior continues you will be removed from the class.

Student Honor Creed

As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so. As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception. Thus, we, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student. We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed.

Written and adopted by the 2002-2003
MSU Student Senate.

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.

Campus Carry Statement

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at [Campus Carry Policy Website](#).

Course Schedule

Date	Readings/Activities
January 10	Introduction and Overview of the Course No Readings
January 12-19	The Changing Presidency: Pika and Maltese Chapter 1 January 17: MLK Day No Class
January 21-26	Election Politics: Pika and Maltese Chapter 2
January 28-February 2	Public Politics Pika and Maltese Chapter 3
February 4-9	Presidential Character and Performance Pika and Maltese Chapter 4
February 11	Exam 1
February 14-18	Legislative Politics Pika and Maltese Chapter 5
February 21-25	Executive Politics Pika and Maltese Chapter 6
February 28-March 4	Judicial Politics Pika and Maltese Chapter 7
March 7	Exam 2
March 9-21	The Politics of Domestic Policy Pika and Maltese Chapter 8
March 14-18	Spring Break: No Class
March 23-28	The Politics of Economic Policy Pika and Maltese Chapter 9
March 30-April 4	The Politics of National Security Pika and Maltese Chapter 10
April 6-11	The Trump Transition and First One Hundred Days Pika and Maltese Chapter 11
April 13-20	Vaughn, Justin S. 2016. "The Post-Rhetorical Presidency of Barack Obama: 'Speak all the time and carry a little stick.'" <i>The Blue</i>

Date	Readings/Activities
	<p><i>Review.</i> https://thebluereview.org/obama-post-rhetorical-presidency/</p> <p>Baum, Matthew A. and Samuel Kernell. 1999. "Has Cable Ended the Golden Age of Presidential Television?" <i>The American Political Science Review.</i> 93 (1): 99-114.</p> <p>Young, Garry and William B. Perkins. 2005. "Presidential Rhetoric, the Public Agenda, and the End of Presidential Television's 'Golden Age.'" <i>The Journal of Politics.</i> 67, (4): 1190-1205.</p>
April 15	Easter Break: No Class
April 22-29	<p>Sides, John and Michael Tesler. "How political science helps explain the rise of Trump: Most voters aren't ideologues." <i>Washington Post</i> https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/02/how-political-science-helps-explain-the-rise-of-trump-most-voters-arent-ideologues/</p> <p>Sides, John and Michael Tesler. "How political science helps explain the rise of Trump (part 3): It's the 'economy, stupid.'" <i>Washington Post</i> https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/04/how-political-science-helps-explain-the-rise-of-trump-part-3-its-the-economy-stupid/</p>
Wednesday, May 4, 2022 10:30am-12:30pm	Final Exam