

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 3011-880**  
**The American Presidency**  
**Spring 2016**

Class Meets:  
Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45  
LIBR N424A

Dr. Lauri McNown  
Ketchum 215  
Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:00

Although the American system of government was designed as a "republic," the best description of it today is as a "presidential system" of government. In this course we will explore the historical foundations, development, and institutionalization of the presidency. The Constitutional evolution of the office will be examined. And we will study the Presidency as it relates to the system of separation of powers. The concept of presidential powers will guide our exploration.

The first section of the course will focus on the public aspects of the presidency. We will first discuss the nomination, financing, and election of the president. This will be followed by an examination of such issues as the relation between the president and the public, the media, and the concept of the personalized presidency.

The second section of the course will begin with an examination of the historical basis for the presidency. Particular attention will be paid to the conception of the presidency as created by the Framers. The evolution of presidential power will be emphasized. Special attention will be paid to the question of war powers.

Finally, a series of case studies will be explored to illustrate the concepts which will have been examined throughout the semester. We will begin with an in-depth examination of the Watergate affair with special emphasis on how this helped to define and shape presidential powers. This in-depth examination will be followed by presentation of case-studies on a variety of topics by members of the class.

Throughout the course we will monitor the presidential primaries and caucuses.

**BOOKS AND READINGS**--There are four required texts to purchase for this course.

Michael Nelson, *The Evolving Presidency*, CQ Press, 5th ed., 2012.

Michael Nelson, *The Presidency and the Political System*, 10th CQ Press, 2013.

Edwards, George C. and Wayne, Stephen J., *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making*, CQ Press, 2014.

In addition you should purchase:

Hacker, Diana, *A Pocket Style Manual*.

These books are available at the University Bookstore.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**PAPERS**--This course will require a substantial amount of writing. Three, three to five page papers are required. These papers include various types of assignments from a critical review of an academic article, an analysis of a current event and applications of theories studied in class. Specific guidelines will be provided in class. Four such papers are assigned. You may elect not to write one of the papers or drop your lowest grade if you write all four. You may re-write any of these papers. Re-written papers will be due one week after the original has been returned to you. You will receive an average of the grades received on the original and the re-written papers. The final paper, a case study, will be an eight to ten page paper.

**EXAMINATION**--A take-home final will be assigned the last week of class and will be due at the time of the final exam.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**--On-time attendance is expected at every class session. You are expected to speak with the instructor if a class is missed. Informed and relevant participation is required of all students. **Deficiencies in attendance or participation will affect the final grade.**

Every participant in this class (students and instructor alike) is expected to strive to maintain an environment that is conducive to learning. Positive participation is expected. Some students will need to work on speaking, some will need to work on listening. Regardless, a respect for others' opinions is imperative in this class.

## **GRADING--**

Three, three to five page papers, 15% each	45%
Case study	25%
Take-home final	20%
Participation	10%
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	100%

## COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK OF:	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENTS AND COMMENTS
Week 1 Jan 12-14	Candidate Selection	Edwards and Wayne, pp. 27-33 and 42-61.  <i>Presidency</i> , #7  <i>Evolving</i> , #41	Throughout the semester additional readings may be assigned as hand-outs or on the internet. It is strongly suggested that students read the <i>New York Times</i> and/or other leading news sources. Typically readings require a reading response, submitted via e-mail due by 9:00 am before class.
Week 2 Jan 19-21	Presidential Elections, Campaign Finance	Edwards and Wayne, pp. 33-42.  A number of internet sources will be assigned.	Paper I assigned Jan 21.
Week 3 Jan 26-28	The Electoral College and other concerns	Nelson, <i>Presidency</i> , #8 Edwards and Wayne, pp. 62-72.	Paper I due Jan 28.
Week 4 Feb 16-18	Presidential Greatness/ Historical Background	Thursday: Edwards and Wayne ch. 1 <i>Evolving Presidency</i> , 1-3.	Paper II assigned Feb 18.
Week 5 Feb 23-25	Studying the Presidency/ Foundations of the Office	Ellis, Appendix A Reports on enumerated powers. Nelson, <i>Presidency</i> , #1	Paper II due Feb 25.
Week 6 Mar 2-4	The Growth of Presidential Power/ Inherent Power	<i>Evolving</i> , #7,28,33. <i>Presidency</i> , #4  <a href="http://law.onecle.com/constitution/article-2/02-executive-power.html">http://law.onecle.com/constitution/article-2/02-executive-power.html</a>	Case study proposal due Mar 4.
Week 7 Mar 8-10	Theories of Presidential Power	Tuesday: <i>Evolving</i> , #5,13,16,23. Thursday: Rudalevige, Andrew, "The Contemporary Presidency," <i>Presidential Studies Quarterly</i> , September 2006.	Paper III assigned Mar 10
Week 8 Mar 15-17	War Powers	Edwards and Wayne, ch.13. <i>Presidency</i> , #19 Articles to be assigned	Paper III due March 17.

Week 9 Mar 8-10	Class choice of topics: Congress, Judiciary, Media, Personality and Leadership, the Presidential Institution, the president and parties, interest groups, etc.	Reading will be assigned according to topics chosen.	Paper IV assigned Mar 10
Week 10 Mar 15-17	Are Undefined Powers also Unlimited?	<i>Presidency</i> , #17  Additional reading will be assigned according to topics chosen.	Paper IV due March 17.
Mar 22-24			Spring Break
Week 11 Mar 29-31	A Case Study of Watergate.	<i>Evolving</i> , #43-45. Additional reading will be assigned.	Case Study Prospectus due Mar 31.
Week 12 April 5-7	A Case Study of Watergate	Reading to be assigned.	
Week 13 April 12-14	Presentations of Case Studies	Reading to be assigned by presenters.	
Week 14 April 19-21	Presentations of Case Studies	Reading to be assigned by presenters.	
Week 15 April 26-28	Presentations of Case Studies  Presidential Greatness?	  Nelson, #6 <i>Evolving</i> , #17, 26, 34, 37.	April 28 Take-home final assigned.  <b>Case study due, in class.</b>

**Final Exams will be due at the time of the regularly scheduled exam, Sunday, May 1.**