

PSCI 3011-200, American Presidency and the Executive Branch

Tuesday, Thursday 6 to 8:30 PM

Hale 240

On-line

Instructor Contact Information

E-mail: michael.kanner@colorado.edu

Office Hours: by appointment before classes

Campus Box: 333 UCB

Communication Policies

I am best contacted by e-mail. I normally answer within 12 hours, although sometimes this is just acknowledgment of receipt. If I have not answered in 24 hours, please call the Political Science office (303-492-7871) and have them contact me by phone.

Instructor Biography

I have been a lecturer in political science and international affairs since 2001. During this time, I have taught courses in all American political institutions except for the Court system. I also teach courses in international relations from security studies to development to international behavior.

While my bachelor's degree was in science with a concentration in engineering, I also have a masters' in managerial science, international relations, and a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, Boulder where I focused on political psychology and its effect on foreign policy decision making. A significant part of my dissertation was the development of a model of individual decision making under prospect theory.

Prior to joining academia, I had a career in the US Army serving as an operations officer from brigade to theater army level in the United States, Latin America, and Europe.

My publications include models of decision making as well as teaching. Additionally, I was an analyst for Defense Department studies on a diverse set of subjects including expert decision making, low-intensity conflict, and preventive diplomacy.

Course Description (from the catalog)

Examines the constitutional, institutional and historical development of the presidency and the federal bureaucracy. Explores the changing role of the executive branch in the U.S. political system over time and competing views of executive power.

Approved for arts and sciences core curriculum: United States context.

Course Objectives

1. Identify the formal and informal powers of the president.
2. Explain the selection and election process.

3. Describe the relationship between the president, the bureaucracy, Congress and the courts.
4. Explain the ways in which presidents make policy.
5. Examine the current presidency considering the prevailing theories.

Questions. There are two questions that frame our discussions.

1. How did we go from the president as the servant of Congress to it becoming the dominant institution?
2. Has the presidency gotten too big?

Overview

Hybrid courses combine traditional classes with online and out of class work. As opposed to a course just having a web component (such as quizzes on D2L), hybrid learning requires a significant and separate component outside of class.

This course consists of two traditional classes a week and online discussions. Tuesday and Thursday lecture/discussion focus on presidential history and theory with much of the class being discussion and application of the readings. The online discussions will be based on debate questions and are more specific discussions than in class.

Course Outline

Topic	Date	Reading	Notes
Introduction	July 10	Syllabus; PPS: Ch. 1 and 2	
Powers	July 12	PPS: Ch. 3 and 4	
	On-line	DP: Ch. 2, 5, and 7	
	July 17	PPS: Ch. 5 and 6	
Selection and Election	July 19	PPS: Ch. 7 and 8	
	On-line	DP: Ch. 3 and 4	
	July 24	PPS: Ch. 9 and 10	
Relationship	July 26	PPS: Ch. 11 and 12	Midterm at end of class • Powers • Selection/Election
	On-line	DP: Ch. 6 and 8	
	July 31	PPS: Ch. 13, 14, and 15	
	August 2	PPS: Ch. 16 and 17	
	On-line	DP: Ch. 11, 12, and 13	
Policy	August 7	PPS: Ch. 18 and 19	
	August 9	Final Exam	
Legend			
DP	<i>Debating the Presidency, Conflicting Perspectives on the American Executive, 4th Edition.</i>		
PPS	<i>The Presidency and the Political System, 10th Edition</i>		

Required Texts

1. Ellis, Richard J. 2018. *Debating the Presidency, Conflicting Perspectives on the American Executive, 4th Edition*. Washington, DC: Sage/CQ Press.
2. Nelson, Michael, ed. 2014. *The Presidency and the Political System, 10th Edition*. Washington, DC: Sage/CQ Press.

Student Responsibilities

Readings are done in advance. My lectures do not mirror the readings. I expect that you will have done the readings before class. A typical lecture might start by highlighting a piece of presidential news, a historical link, and then a short talk on the relationship of the reading to other political and presidential literature.

Be prepared to participate in class. After the presentation, class discussions will start. In some cases, it will be me reviewing major points and asking your opinion on it. I also end each class with a discussion of a major theme in the reading.

Participate online. In a hybrid class, a significant aspect is on-line discussions. You can expect to spend work on the class between the Thursday and Tuesday meetings. This time should be spent

1. Doing the readings for the next week.
2. Reading the assigned chapter(s) from *Debating the Presidency*. (There may be more than one).
3. Participate in a discussion of the debate question on D2L. To get credit, your position must be posted no later than 11:59 PM on Sunday (July 15, July 22, July 29, August 5). Postings will be locked to everyone except me at that point.
4. Submitting an analysis of one question to the DROPBOX folder on D2L (see details under Grading Criteria)

Grading Criteria

Grades are based on a scale of 100 points. Your final grade will be a function of the number of points that you achieve.

A	94-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59
A-	90-93	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

Points are allocated based on the following distribution.

Midterm	25 points
Final	35 points
Debate Papers (4 at 5 points each)	20 points
On-line participation	10 points
Participation/attendance	10 points
Total	100 points

Midterm. This will be held at the end of class. It will consist of seven possible questions of which you need to answer five. A review will be published about ten days in advance of the exam.

Final Exam. This will be held on the last day of class. It will consist of nine possible questions of which you need to answer seven. A review will be published about ten days in advance of the exam.

Debate Papers.

You must submit one analysis for each section of the course (four over the space of the semester). Papers should be between 600 and 800 words and address these questions.

1. What is the issue being debated? (1 point)
2. What is the ‘pro’ argument? (1/2 point)
 - a. What assumptions are being made?
 - b. What evidence is provided in support?
3. What is the ‘con’ argument? (1/2 point)
 - a. What assumptions are being made?
 - b. What evidence is provided in support?
4. Which side do you support? (2 points)
 - a. Why?
 - b. With what elements of the argument did you support?
 - c. What problems did you see with the other argument?
5. What are the implications of this side winning the debate? (1 point)

These papers should be submitted to the appropriate Debate topic in the Dropbox on D2L. Sections, debate topics and due dates are –

Section of Course	Readings from <i>Debating the Presidency</i>	Deadline (11:59 PM on these dates)
Powers	2, 5, or 7	July 15
Selection and Election	3 or 4	July 22
Relationship I	6 or 8	July 29
Relationship II	11, 12, or 13	August 5

Late papers will not be accepted.

Online participation.

Online participation is a key aspect of any hybrid class.

In addition to submitting your paper to the Dropbox, you need to argue your position in an online discussion.

1. You should post your comment and comment on at least one position of another student.
2. Comments should be substantive, which means more than ‘I agree with that.’

3. To get credit, your position must be posted no later than 11:59 PM on Sunday ((July 15, July 22, July 29, August 5). After that, the question will be locked to anyone by the instructor.

Participation/attendance. Ten percent of life is showing up. The same is true for this class.

Policies (as established by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education).

Accommodation for Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students) (www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with your professor.

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, let me know in advance if you will be missing class and I will consider your individual case.

See the [campus policy regarding religious observances](#) for full details.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

On-line

All postings will be monitored for *ad hominem* attacks and cyber-bullying. First-time violators will be warned about postings and online behavior. Second time by the same offender will result in removal of posting access. You will still be required to take the

exams, but will be penalized by not being able to earn a score for participation. Any student that feels that online postings are offensive or feel that they are the victim of cyber-bullying through the course should contact me at michael.kanner@colorado.edu

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on [classroom behavior](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Honor Code

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to [the academic integrity policy](#). Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).