

THE AMERICAN EXECUTIVE
POLS 3203
Fall 2008

Classroom: Brewster C-101
Class time: Tues. and Thurs., 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.
Office hours: Tues. 2–4 p.m., Wed. 10 a.m.–12 p.m.,
Thurs. 2–4 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Peter L. Francia
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COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

The focus of this course is the American presidency. The class will examine six major areas: (1) the creation and development of the presidency; (2) presidential elections; (3) the effect of public opinion and the media on the presidency; (4) presidential styles and decision making; (5) the President's relationship with Congress and the judiciary; and (6) presidential policy making. As we cover each of these subjects, I encourage you to think critically about several important questions concerning the presidency: How did the framers of the Constitution envision the presidency? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the presidential nomination process? What issues are appropriate for candidates to discuss during a presidential election? How do presidential elections affect a President's ability to govern? When is a President able to claim a "mandate"? Does the President have too much or too little power in the policy making process?

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- (1) George C. Edwards III and Stephen J. Wayne, *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy Making*, 7th ed. (Thomson Wadsworth, 2006).
- (2) Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to George W. Bush*, 2nd ed. (Princeton University Press, 2004).
- (3) Bill Bishop, *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart* (Thomson Wadsworth, 2004).

OPTIONAL READINGS

- (1) Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower* (Basic Books, 2007).
- (2) Costas Panagopoulos (ed.), *Rewiring Politics: Presidential Nominating Conventions in the Modern Age* (Louisiana State University Press, 2007).
- (3) Bob Woodward, *Shadow: Five Presidents and the Legacy of Watergate* (Simon & Schuster, 1999).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- (1) A mid-term exam on October 7, 2008. The exam is worth 25% of your grade.
- (2) A 15-page research paper due on December 2, 2008. The paper is worth 30% of your grade.
- (3) A final exam on December 9, 2008. The exam is worth 30% of your grade.
- (4) Class attendance and participation is worth the remaining 15% of your grade.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

All students must attend class. I will circulate an attendance sign-in sheet at the beginning of each lecture. It is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the attendance sheet if you are present in class. If you arrive excessively late to class or if you leave class early, you will receive only partial credit for attendance. Your class attendance grade will be based on the percentage of classes that you attend (e.g., a student who attends every class will earn a 100; a student who attends half of the classes will earn a 50, etc.). I expect all students to complete the assigned readings before each class and to be ready to participate in each class discussion. Students who are active participants during class discussions will receive a bonus point added to their overall course grade.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

I will excuse absences only for an incapacitating or contagious illness, unavoidable surgery, a death in the immediate family, or if you are a member of an ECU athletic team that requires you to travel and miss class. You must present some form of verification if you wish to have your absence excused. Acceptable forms of verification include the following: (1) a doctor's note indicating the severity of your illness or that you required unavoidable surgery; (2) an obituary; or (3) official documentation from the athletic department indicating your travel schedule. You must present me with verification no later than one week after the absence.

EXAM ATTENDANCE

Failure to be present for any of the scheduled exams will result in an automatic "0." On all exam dates, please come prepared with an exam booklet and a pen. If you cannot attend the exams, you must contact me before I have administered the test. I will grant make-up exams only for extraordinary circumstances. If you miss an exam because of an illness, you are still required to contact me before the exam. You also must present me with a note from your doctor that verifies your illness was serious enough to prevent you from taking the exam. If you have questions about a possible school closing due to severe weather or other reasons, please call the University Emergency Telephone Number at 252-328-0062.

LATE PAPER POLICY

You are required to submit the 15-page paper assignment to me by the beginning of class on December 2, 2008. I will treat any paper submitted to me after the due date as late. I will deduct half a letter grade (5 points) for papers submitted after class on the due date. I will deduct a full letter grade (10 points) for each day after the deadline (e.g., a paper submitted one day late loses 10 points, two days late loses 20 points, and so forth). I will grant extensions only under circumstances that I deem extraordinary. If you fail to submit the paper because of an illness, you are still required to contact me before the due date. You also must present a note from your doctor that verifies your illness was serious enough to prevent you from completing the paper on time.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I will strictly enforce the university code of academic integrity in this course. According to the East Carolina University Honor Code, violations of academic integrity include the following:

- (1) Cheating. Unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work.
- (2) Plagiarism. Copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting same as one's own original work. (Please note that failure to recognize and cite the work of others in your research constitutes plagiarism.)
- (3) Falsification. Statement of any untruth, either spoken or written, regarding any circumstances relative to academic work.
- (4) Attempts. Attempting any act that if completed would constitute an academic integrity violation as defined herein.

For more information about university policies concerning academic integrity, please visit the website: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-hhp/Academic_integrity.cfm. If you violate the Honor Code, I will report the matter to the Academic Integrity Board for disciplinary action. The penalties for violating the university code of academic integrity range from failure in the course to expulsion from the university.

CLASSROOM RULES

The classroom is a learning environment. I expect all students to observe some basic rules of courtesy, which include the following: (1) arrive to class on time and do not leave before class is dismissed; (2) turn off cell phones; (3) no eating during class; (4) do not read the newspaper, listen to music through headphones, etc., during class; (5) do not sleep during class; (6) do not carry on private conversations with others in the classroom while someone else is speaking; and (7) please be courteous to your classmates and respectful of your fellow students' views, comments, and questions. Failure to follow these rules will negatively impact your class attendance and participation grade, and could result in your expulsion from the class.

DISABILITY SERVICES

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 to verify the disability before any accommodations can occur. The telephone number is 252-737-1016.

APPOINTMENTS

My office is located in the Brewster Building, Room A-119. My office hours are from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday, and from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. every Wednesday. If you cannot meet with me during office hours, please see me after class or contact me by telephone or e-mail to schedule an appointment. If you need to reach me after 4:00 p.m., please use e-mail.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1. Studying the Presidency

August 21, 2008. Overview of the course / The importance of the presidency.

Week 2. The Creation of the Presidency

August 26, 2008. The making of the presidency and the scope of presidential power.

August 28, 2008. Video. *The Presidents, Washington to Monroe: 1789-1825*.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 1.

Week 3. The Nomination Process

September 2, 2008. The evolution of the nomination process / Rules of the game.

September 4, 2008. Campaign strategies for winning the nomination.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 2.

Week 4. The Aftermath of Winning the Nomination

September 9, 2008. Selecting a running mate / Presidential nominating conventions.

September 11, 2008. The Electoral College / Rules of the game.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 3, pp. 59-73.

Week 5. The General Election Campaign

September 16, 2008. General election campaigns and strategies.

September 18, 2008. Presidential debates, advertising, and determining a mandate.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 3, pp. 73-99.

Week 6. Experiencing the Presidential Campaign

September 23, 2008. Video. *The War Room*.

September 25, 2008. Video. *Journeys with George*.

Required reading for the week: Joshua Green, "The Front-Runner's Fall," *Atlantic Monthly*, September 2008, at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200809/hillary-clinton-campaign>;

Joshua Green, "The Amazing Money Machine," *Atlantic Monthly*, June 2008, at

<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200806/obama-finance>; Joshua Green, "Do Polls Still Work?," *Atlantic Monthly*, November 2006, at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200611/green-polling>.

Week 7. The Modern Presidency

September 30, 2008. The expansion of presidential powers and public expectations.

October 2, 2008. Going public: "The Bully Pulpit."

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 4.

Week 8. The President and the Media

October 7, 2008. **EXAM # 1** (covers *Presidential Leadership*, Chapters 1-4).

October 9, 2008. The President and the media.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 5.

Week 9. The President's Office

October 14, 2008. **No class** (Fall Break).

October 16, 2008. The President's cabinet.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 6.

Week 10. Presidential Character and Performance

October 21, 2008. Psychological characteristics and management styles.

October 23, 2008. Leadership styles of Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 8; *Presidential Difference*, Chapters 1-5.

Week 11. Presidential Leadership

October 28, 2008. Leadership styles of Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter.

October 30, 2008. Leadership styles of Reagan, Bush 41, Clinton, and Bush 43.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Difference*, Chapters 6-11.

Week 12. The President and the Congress

November 4, 2008. The President's relationship with Congress.

November 6, 2008. The President's formal legislative powers.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 10.

Week 13. The President and the Judiciary

November 11, 2008. The politics of judicial selection.

November 13, 2008. President-Supreme Court relations / Presidential judicial powers.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 11.

Week 14. Domestic Policy Making

November 18, 2008. The role of the President in domestic policies.

November 20, 2008. Economic policy making.

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapter 12.

Week 15. Foreign Policy Making

November 25, 2008. Foreign policy making and unilateral presidential powers.

November 27, 2008. **No class** (Thanksgiving break).

Required reading for the week: *Presidential Leadership*, Chapters 13-15.

Week 16. Presidential Power

December 2, 2008. Video. *Bill Moyers Journal: The Rise of Unitary Executive Power*

Required reading for the week: Joshua Green, "The Rove Presidency," *Atlantic Monthly*, September 2007, at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200709/karl-rove>.

***** 15-PAGE PAPER ASSIGNMENT IS DUE *****

FINAL EXAM

December 9, 2008. The final exam is scheduled from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Brewster C-101.

15-PAGE PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Discuss whether recent presidential elections have become more polarizing than they have in the past. What evidence does Bill Bishop present in his book, *The Big Sort*? Is his argument compelling? Why or why not? Please draw on examples from current elections, including the 2008 election, and use available polling data to support your arguments. You should also supplement your research by drawing on themes covered in the lectures, course readings, and outside sources. I recommend the following additional readings:

- Morris P. Fiorina with Samuel J. Abrams and Jeremy C. Pope, *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004).
- Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004).
- Larry Bartels, "What's the Matter with *What's the Matter with Kansas?*" *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* (2006) 1:201-226. Available at: <http://www.princeton.edu/~bartels/kansasqjps06.pdf>

The paper is due December 2, 2008.

Tips for Preparing the Paper

- To earn a passing grade, your paper should include a minimum of five different sources. Please note that any papers without citations or a proper bibliography are guilty of plagiarism. These papers will receive an automatic “F” and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.
- All papers should be double-spaced with one inch margins in Times New Roman 12-font. Page numbers should also be included.
- A well-written paper requires a thesis or an argument. You should state your thesis in the beginning or introduction of the paper.
- The introduction should tell the reader what exactly you are going to say in the paper. The introduction also should arouse the interest of the reader.
- The body of the paper should provide evidence that convinces the reader of your central argument. Citations from books, articles, and other sources are necessary to make your argument as convincing as possible. The best outside sources are academic books and journal articles (e.g., *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, etc.).
- The conclusion should summarize your major arguments and consider any implications related to your thesis. It should also tie together your central points in a coherent manner.
- Avoid excessively long sentences. So-called “run-on” sentences occur when a comma (instead of a period, semicolon, or conjunction) is used between two complete sentences.
- Avoid the overlong and the very short paragraph. A paragraph with 300 words or more is too long. A paragraph with only one or two sentences is too short.
- Use clear language. The vocabulary you use should be free of jargon. This includes phrases that are vague and unnecessary in your writing. Some examples include: “as for the fact that,” “along the line of,” “as to whether,” “with reference to.” The vocabulary you use also should be free of slang. The word “gung-ho” is an example of slang. Use the word “enthusiastic” instead. Finally, avoid using informal expressions, such as “out on a limb.”
- Do not overwrite with unusual or big words. Sometimes the simple word is better. For example, there is no need to refer to a “dog” as a “canine” or a “knife” as “cutlery.” Also, avoid clichés or trite expressions in your writing. (Example: “bury the hatchet.” A better choice of words might be to “make peace” or “stop fighting.”)
- For additional information on how to write a proper research paper, please see Dr. Jody Baumgartner’s website at <http://professional.jodyb.net/write.pdf>.